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THE  
RIVER DUDDON,  
A SERIES OF  
**Sonnets :**  
VAUDRACOUR AND JULIA :  
AND  
*OTHER POEMS.*

TO WHICH IS ANNEXED,  
A TOPOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION  
OF THE  
**Country of the Lakes,**  
*IN THE NORTH OF ENGLAND.*

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BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

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LONDON :  
PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,  
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1820.

REPORT

OF THE

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS Publication, together with "The Thanksgiving Ode," Jan. 18. 1816, "The Tale of Peter Bell," and "The Waggoner," completes the third and last volume of the Author's Miscellaneous Poems.

1870

1871

1872

1873

1874

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Fell

THE RIVER DUDDON rises upon Wrynose Fell, on the confines of Westmorland, Cumberland, and Lancashire ; and, serving as a boundary to the two latter counties, for the space of about twenty-five miles, enters the Irish sea, between the isle of Walney and the lordship of Millum.



I.

Not envying shades which haply yet may throw  
A grateful coolness round that rocky spring,  
Bandusia, once responsive to the string  
Of the Horatian lyre with babbling flow ;  
Careless of flowers that in perennial blow  
Round the moist marge of Persian fountains cling ;  
Heedless of Alpine torrents thundering  
Through icy portals radiant as heaven's bow ;  
I seek the birth-place of a native Stream.—  
All hail ye mountains, hail thou morning light !  
Better to breathe upon this aëry height  
Than pass in needless sleep from dream to dream ;  
Pure flow the verse, pure, vigorous, free, and bright,  
For Duddon, long lov'd Duddon, is my theme !

## II.

CHILD of the clouds ! remote from every taint  
Of sordid industry thy lot is cast ;  
Thine are the honors of the lofty waste ;  
Not seldom, when with heat the valleys faint,  
Thy hand-maid Frost with spangled tissue quaint  
Thy cradle decks ; — to chaunt thy birth, thou hast  
No meaner Poet than the whistling Blast,  
And Desolation is thy Patron-saint !  
She guards thee, ruthless Power ! who would not spare  
Those mighty forests, once the bison's screen,  
Where stalk'd the huge deer to his shaggy lair \*  
Through paths and alleys roofed with sombre green,  
Thousand of years before the silent air  
Was pierced by whizzing shaft of hunter keen !

\* The deer alluded to is the Leigh, a gigantic species long since extinct.

## III.

How shall I paint thee? — Be this naked stone  
My seat while I give way to such intent ;  
Pleased could my verse, a speaking monument,  
Make to the eyes of men thy features known.  
But as of all those tripping lambs not one  
Outruns his fellows, so hath nature lent  
To thy beginning nought that doth present  
Peculiar grounds for hope to build upon.  
To dignify the spot that gives thee birth,  
No sign of hoar Antiquity's esteem  
Appears, and none of modern Fortune's care ;  
Yet thou thyself hast round thee shed a gleam  
Of brilliant moss, instinct with freshness rare ;  
Prompt offering to thy Foster-mother, Earth !

## IV.

TAKE, cradled Nursling of the mountain, take  
This parting glance, no negligent adieu !  
A Protean change seems wrought while I pursue  
The curves, a loosely-scattered chain doth make ;  
Or rather thou appear'st a glistering snake,  
Silent, and to the gazer's eye untrue,  
Thridding with sinuous lapse the rushes, through  
Dwarf willows gliding, and by ferny brake.  
Starts from a dizzy steep the undaunted Rill  
Rob'd instantly in garb of snow-white foam ;  
And laughing dares the Adventurer, who hath clomb  
So high, a rival purpose to fulfil ;  
Else let the Dastard backward wend, and roam,  
Seeking less bold achievement, where he will !

## V.

SOLE listener, Duddon ! to the breeze that play'd  
With thy clear voice, I caught the fitful sound  
Wafted o'er sullen moss and craggy mound,  
Unfruitful solitudes, that seem'd to upbraid  
The sun in heaven ! — but now, to form a shade  
For Thee, green alders have together wound  
Their foliage ; ashes flung their arms around ;  
And birch-trees risen in silver colonnade.  
And thou hast also tempted here to rise,  
'Mid sheltering pines, this Cottage rude and grey ;  
Whose ruddy children, by the mother's eyes  
Carelessly watch'd, sport through the summer day,  
Thy pleas'd associates : — light as endless May  
On infant bosoms lonely Nature lies.

## VI.

## FLOWERS.

ERE yet our course was 'graced with social trees  
It lacked not old remains of hawthorn bowers,  
Where small birds warbled to their paramours;  
And, earlier still, was heard the hum of bees;  
I saw them ply their harmless robberies,  
And caught the fragrance which the sundry flowers,  
Fed by the stream with soft perpetual showers,  
Plenteously yielded to the vagrant breeze.  
There bloomed the strawberry of the wilderness;  
The trembling eye-bright showed her sapphire blue,  
The thyme her purple like the blush of even;  
And, if the breath of some to no caress  
Invited, forth they peeped so fair to view,  
All kinds alike seemed favourites of Heaven.

## VII.

“CHANGE me, some God, into that breathing rose !”

The love-sick Stripling fancifully sighs,

The envied flower beholding, as it lies

On Laura's breast, in exquisite repose ;

Or he would pass into her Bird, that throws

The darts of song from out its wiry cage ;

Enraptured, — could he for himself engage

The thousandth part of what the Nymph bestows,

And what the little careless Innocent

Ungraciously receives. Too daring choice !

There are whose calmer mind it would content

To be an uncultured flow'et of the glen,

Fearless of plough and scythe ; or darkling wren,

That tunes on Duddon's banks her slender voice.

## VIII.

WHAT aspect bore the Man who roved or fled,  
First of his tribe, to this dark dell — who first  
In this pellucid Current slaked his thirst ?  
What hopes came with him ? what designs were spread  
Along his path ? His unprotected bed  
What dreams encompass'd ? Was the Intruder nurs'd  
In hideous usages, and rites accurs'd,  
That thinned the living and disturbed the dead ?  
No voice replies ; — the earth, the air is mute ;  
And Thou, blue Streamlet, murmuring yield'st no more  
Than a soft record that whatever fruit  
Of ignorance thou might'st witness heretofore,  
Thy function was to heal and to restore,  
To soothe and cleanse, not madden and pollute !



## IX.

## THE STEPPING-STONES.

THE struggling Rill insensibly is grown  
Into a Brook of loud and stately march,  
Cross'd ever and anon by plank and arch ;  
And, for like use, lo ! what might seem a zone  
Chosen for ornament ; stone match'd with stone  
In studied symmetry, with interspace  
For the clear waters to pursue their race  
Without restraint. — How swiftly have they flown !  
Succeeding — still succeeding ! Here the Child  
Puts, when the high-swoln Flood runs fierce and wild,  
His budding courage to the proof ; — and here  
Declining Manhood learns to note the sly  
And sure encroachments of infirmity,  
Thinking how fast time runs, life's end how near !

## X.

## THE SAME SUBJECT.

Not so that Pair whose youthful spirits dance  
With prompt emotion, urging them to pass;  
A sweet confusion checks the Shepherd-lass;  
Blushing she eyes the dizzy flood askance, —  
To stop ashamed — too timid to advance;  
She ventures once again — another pause !  
His outstretch'd hand He tauntingly withdraws —  
She sues for help with piteous utterance !  
Chidden she chides again ; the thrilling touch  
Both feel when he renews the wish'd-for aid :  
Ah ! if their fluttering hearts should stir too much,  
Should beat too strongly, both may be betrayed.  
The frolic Loves who, from yon high rock, see  
The struggle, clap their wings for victory !

## XI.

## THE FAËRY CHASM.

No fiction was it of the antique age :  
A sky-blue stone, within this sunless cleft,  
Is of the very foot-marks unbereft  
Which tiny Elves impress'd ; — on that smooth stage  
Dancing with all their brilliant equipage  
In secret revels — haply after theft  
Of some sweet babe, flower stolen, and coarse weed left,  
For the distracted mother to assuage  
Her grief with, as she might ! — But, where, oh where  
Is traceable a vestige of the notes  
That ruled those dances, wild in character ?  
— Deep underground ? — Or in the upper air,  
On the shrill wind of midnight ? or where floats  
O'er twilight fields the autumnal gossamer ?

## XII.

## HINTS FOR THE FANCY.

ON, loitering Muse ! — The swift Stream chides us — on !  
Albeit his deep-worn channel doth immure  
Objects immense, pourtray'd in miniature,  
Wild shapes for many a strange comparison !  
Niagaras, Alpine passes, and anon  
Abodes of Naiads, calm abysses pure,  
Bright liquid mansions, fashion'd to endure  
When the broad Oak drops, a leafless skeleton,  
And the solidities of mortal pride,  
Palace and Tower, are crumbled into dust !  
— The Bard who walks with Duddon for his guide,  
Shall find such toys of Fancy thickly set : —  
Turn from the sight, enamour'd Muse — we must ;  
Leave them — and, if thou canst, without regret !

## XIII.

## OPEN PROSPECT.

HAIL to the fields — with Dwellings sprinkled o'er,  
And one small Hamlet, under a green hill,  
Cluster'd with barn and byer, and spouting mill !  
A glance suffices, — should we wish for more,  
Gay June would scorn us ; — but when bleak winds roar  
Through the stiff lance-like shoots of pollard ash,  
Dread swell of sound ! loud as the gusts that lash  
The matted forests of Ontario's shore  
By wasteful steel unsmitten, then would I  
Turn into port, — and, reckless of the gale,  
Reckless of angry Duddon sweeping by,  
While the warm hearth exalts the mantling ale,  
Laugh with the generous household heartily,  
At all the merry pranks of Donnerdale !

## XIV.

O Mountain Stream ! the Shepherd and his Cot  
Are privileged Inmates of deep solitude ;  
Nor would the nicest Anchorite exclude  
A field or two of brighter green, or plot  
Of tillage-ground, that seemeth like a spot  
Of stationary sunshine : — thou hast view'd  
These only, Duddon ! with their paths renew'd  
By fits and starts, yet this contents thee not.  
Thee hath some awful Spirit impelled to leave,  
Utterly to desert, the haunts of men, —  
Though simple thy companions were and few ;  
And through this wilderness a passage cleave  
Attended but by thy own voice, save when  
The Clouds and Fowls of the air thy way pursue !

## XV.

FROM this deep chasm — where quivering sun-beams play  
Upon its loftiest crags — mine eyes behold  
A gloomy NICHE, capacious, blank, and cold;  
A concave free from shrubs and mosses grey;  
In semblance fresh, as if, with dire affray,  
Some Statue, placed amid these regions old  
For tutelary service, thence had rolled,  
Startling the flight of timid Yesterday!  
Was it by mortals sculptur'd? — weary slaves  
Of slow endeavour! or abruptly cast  
Into rude shape by fire, with roaring blast  
Tempestuously let loose from central caves?  
Or fashioned by the turbulence of waves,  
Then, when o'er highest hills the Deluge past?

## XVI.

## AMERICAN TRADITION.

SUCH fruitless questions may not long beguile  
Or plague the fancy, mid the sculptured shows  
Conspicuous yet where Oroonoko flows ;  
*There* would the Indian answer with a smile  
Aim'd at the White Man's ignorance, the while  
Of the GREAT WATERS telling, how they rose,  
Covered the plains, and wandering where they chose,  
Mounted through every intricate defile,  
Triumphant. — Inundation wide and deep,  
O'er which his Fathers urged, to ridge and steep  
Else unapproachable, their buoyant way ;  
And carved, on mural cliff's undreaded side,  
Sun, moon, and stars, and beast of chase or prey ;  
Whate'er they sought, shunn'd, loved, or deified ! \*

\* See Humboldt's Personal Narrative.



## XVII.

## RETURN.

A DARK plume fetch me from yon blasted Yew  
Perched on whose top the Danish Raven croaks;  
Aloft, the imperial Bird of Rome invokes  
Departed ages, shedding where he flew  
Loose fragments of wild wailing that bestrew  
The clouds, and thrill the chambers of the rocks,  
And into silence hush the timorous flocks,  
That slept so calmly while the nightly dew  
Moisten'd each fleece, beneath the twinkling stars :  
These couch'd mid that lone Camp on Hardknot's height,  
Whose Guardians bent the knee to Jove and Mars :  
These near that mystic Round of Druid frame,  
Tardily sinking by its proper weight  
Deep into patient Earth, from whose smooth breast it came !

## XVIII.

## SEATHWAITE CHAPEL.

SACRED Religion, "mother of form and fear,"  
Dread Arbitress of mutable respect,  
New rites ordaining when the old are wreck'd,  
Or cease to please the fickle worshipper;  
If one strong wish may be embosomed here,  
Mother of Love! for this deep vale, protect  
Truth's holy lamp, pure source of bright effect,  
Gifted to purge the vapoury atmosphere  
That seeks to stifle it; — as in those days  
When this low Pile a Gospel Teacher knew,  
Whose good works formed an endless retinue:  
Such Priest as Chaucer sang in fervent lays;  
Such as the heaven-taught skill of Herbert drew;  
And tender Goldsmith crown'd with deathless praise!

## XIX.

## TRIBUTARY STREAM.

My frame hath often trembled with delight  
When hope presented some far-distant good,  
That seemed from heaven descending, like the flood  
Of yon pure waters, from their æry height,  
Hurrying with lordly Duddon to unite ;  
Who, mid a world of images imprest  
On the calm depth of his transparent breast,  
Appears to cherish most that Torrent white,  
The fairest, softest, liveliest of them all !  
And seldom hath ear listen'd to a tune  
More lulling than the busy hum of Noon,  
Swoln by that voice — whose murmur musical  
Announces to the thirsty fields a boon  
Dewy and fresh, till showers again shall fall.

## XX.

## THE PLAIN OF DONNERDALE.

THE old inventive Poets, had they seen,  
Or rather felt, the entrancement that detains  
Thy waters, Duddon ! mid these flow'ry plains,  
The still repose, the liquid lapse serene,  
Transferr'd to bowers imperishably green,  
Had beautified Elysium ! But these chains  
Will soon be broken ; — a rough course remains,  
Rough as the past ; where Thou, of placid mien,  
Innocuous as a firstling of a flock,  
And countenanced like a soft cerulean sky,  
Shalt change thy temper ; and, with many a shock  
Given and received in mutual jeopardy,  
Dance like a Bacchanal from rock to rock,  
Tossing her frantic thyrsus wide and high !

## XXI.

WHENCE that low voice ? — A whisper from the heart,  
That told of days long past when here I roved  
With friends and kindred tenderly beloved;  
Some who had early mandates to depart,  
Yet are allowed to steal my path athwart  
By Duddon's side ; once more do we unite,  
Once more beneath the kind Earth's tranquil light ;  
And smother'd joys into new being start.  
From her unworthy seat, the cloudy stall  
Of Time, breaks forth triamphant Memory ;  
Her glistening tresses bound, yet light and free  
As golden locks of birch, that rise and fall  
On gales that breathe too gently to recal  
Aught of the fading year's inclemency !

## XXII.

## TRADITION.

A LOVE-LORN Maid, at some far-distant time,  
Came to this hidden pool, whose depths surpass  
In crystal clearness Dian's looking-glass;  
And, gazing, saw that rose, which from the prime  
Derives its name, reflected as the chime  
Of echo doth reverberate some sweet sound:  
The starry treasure from the blue profound  
She long'd to ravish; — shall she plunge, or climb  
The humid precipice, and seize the guest  
Of April, smiling high in upper air?  
Desperate alternative! what fiend could dare  
To prompt the thought? — Upon the steep rock's breast  
The lonely Primrose yet renews its bloom,  
Untouched memento of her hapless doom!

## XXIII.

## SHEEP WASHING.

SAD thoughts, avaunt ! — the fervour of the year,  
Poured on the fleece-encumbered flock, invites  
To laving currents, for prelusive rites  
Duly performed before the Dales-men shear  
Their panting charge. The distant Mountains hear,  
Hear and repeat, the turmoil that unites  
Clamour of boys with innocent despites  
Of barking dogs, and bleatings from strange fear.  
Meanwhile, if Duddon's spotless breast receive  
Unwelcome mixtures as the uncouth noise  
Thickens, the pastoral River will forgive  
Such wrong ; nor need we blame the licensed joys  
Though false to Nature's quiet equipoise :  
Frank are the sports, the stains are fugitive.

## XXIV.

## THE RESTING-PLACE.

MID-NOON is past ; — upon the sultry mead  
No zephyr breathes, no cloud its shadow throws :  
If we advance unstrengthen'd by repose,  
Farewell the solace of the vagrant reed.  
This Nook, with woodbine hung and straggling weed,  
Tempting recess as ever pilgrim chose,  
Half grot, half arbour, proffers to enclose  
Body and mind, from molestation freed,  
In narrow compass — narrow as itself :  
Or if the Fancy, too industrious Elf,  
Be loth that we should breathe awhile exempt  
From new incitements friendly to our task,  
There wants not stealthy prospect, that may tempt  
Loose Idless to forego her wily mask.



## XXV.

METHINKS 'twere no unprecedented feat  
Should some benignant Minister of air  
Lift, and encircle with a cloudy chair,  
The One for whom my heart shall ever beat  
With tenderest love ; — or, if a safer seat  
Atween his downy wings be furnished, there  
Would lodge her, and the cherish'd burden bear  
O'er hill and valley to this dim retreat !  
Rough ways my steps have trod ; too rough and long  
For her companionship ; here dwells soft ease :  
With sweets which she partakes not some distaste  
Mingles, and lurking consciousness of wrong ;  
Languish the flowers ; the waters seem to waste  
Their vocal charm ; their sparklings cease to please.

## XXVI.

RETURN, Content ! for fondly I pursued,  
Even when a child, the Streams — unheard, unseen ;  
Through tangled woods, impending rocks between ;  
Or, free as air, with flying inquest viewed  
The sullen reservoirs whence their bold brood,  
Pure as the morning, fretful, boisterous, keen,  
Green as the salt-sea billows, white and green,  
Poured down the hills, a choral multitude !  
Nor have I tracked their course for scanty gains ;  
They taught me random cares and truant joys,  
That shield from mischief and preserve from stains  
Vague minds, while men are growing out of boys ;  
Maturer Fancy owes to their rough noise  
Impetuous thoughts that brook not servile reins.

## XXVII.

## JOURNEY RENEWED.

I ROSE while yet the cattle, heat-opprest,  
Crowded together under rustling trees,  
Brushed by the current of the water-breeze;  
And for *their* sakes, and love of all that rest,  
On Duddon's margin, in the sheltering nest;  
For all the startled scaly tribes that slink  
Into his coverts, and each fearless link  
Of dancing insects forged upon his breast;  
For these, and hopes and recollections worn  
Close to the vital seat of human clay;  
Glad meetings — tender partings — that upstay  
The drooping mind of absence, by vows sworn  
In his pure presence near the trysting thorn;  
I thanked the Leader of my onward way.

## XXVIII.

No record tells of lance opposed to lance,  
Horse charging horse mid these retired domains;  
Nor that their turf drank purple from the veins  
Of heroes fall'n, or struggling to advance,  
Till doubtful combat issued in a trance  
Of victory, that struck through heart and reins,  
Even to the inmost seat of mortal pains,  
And lightened o'er the pallid countenance.  
Yet, to the loyal and the brave, who lie  
In the blank earth, neglected and forlorn,  
The passing Winds memorial tribute pay;  
The Torrents chaunt their praise, inspiring scorn  
Of power usurp'd, — with proclamation high,  
And glad acknowledgment of lawful sway.

## XXIX.

Who swerves from innocence, who makes divorce  
Of that serene companion — a good name,  
Recovers not his loss ; but walks with shame,  
With doubt, with fear, and haply with remorse.  
And oft-times he, who, yielding to the force  
Of chance-temptation, ere his journey end,  
From chosen comrade turns, or faithful friend,  
In vain shall rue the broken intercourse.  
Not so with such as loosely wear the chain  
That binds them, pleasant River ! to thy side : —  
Through the rough copse wheel Thou with hasty stride,  
I choose to saunter o'er the grassy plain,  
Sure, when the separation has been tried,  
That we, who part in love, shall meet again.

## XXX.

THE KIRK of ULPHA to the Pilgrim's eye  
Is welcome as a Star, that doth present  
Its shining forehead through the peaceful rent  
Of a black cloud diffused o'er half the sky ;  
Or as a fruitful palm-tree towering high  
O'er the parched waste beside an Arab's tent ;  
Or the Indian tree whose branches, downward bent,  
Take root again, a boundless canopy.  
How sweet were leisure ! could it yield no more  
Than mid that wave-washed Church-yard to recline,  
From pastoral graves extracting thoughts divine ;  
Or there to pace, and mark the summits hoar  
Of distant moon-lit mountains faintly shine,  
Sooth'd by the unseen River's gentle roar.

## XXXI.

Not hurled precipitous from steep to steep ;  
Lingering no more mid flower-enamelled lands  
And blooming thickets ; nor by rocky bands  
Held ; — but in radiant progress tow'rd the Deep  
Where mightiest rivers into powerless sleep  
Sink, and forget their nature ; — *now* expands  
Majestic Duddon, over smooth flat sands,  
Gliding in silence with unfettered sweep !  
Beneath an ampler sky a region wide  
Is opened round him ; — hamlets, towers, and towns,  
And blue-topp'd hills, behold him from afar ;  
In stately mien to sovereign Thames allied,  
Spreading his bosom under Kentish downs,  
With Commerce freighted or triumphant War.

## XXXII.

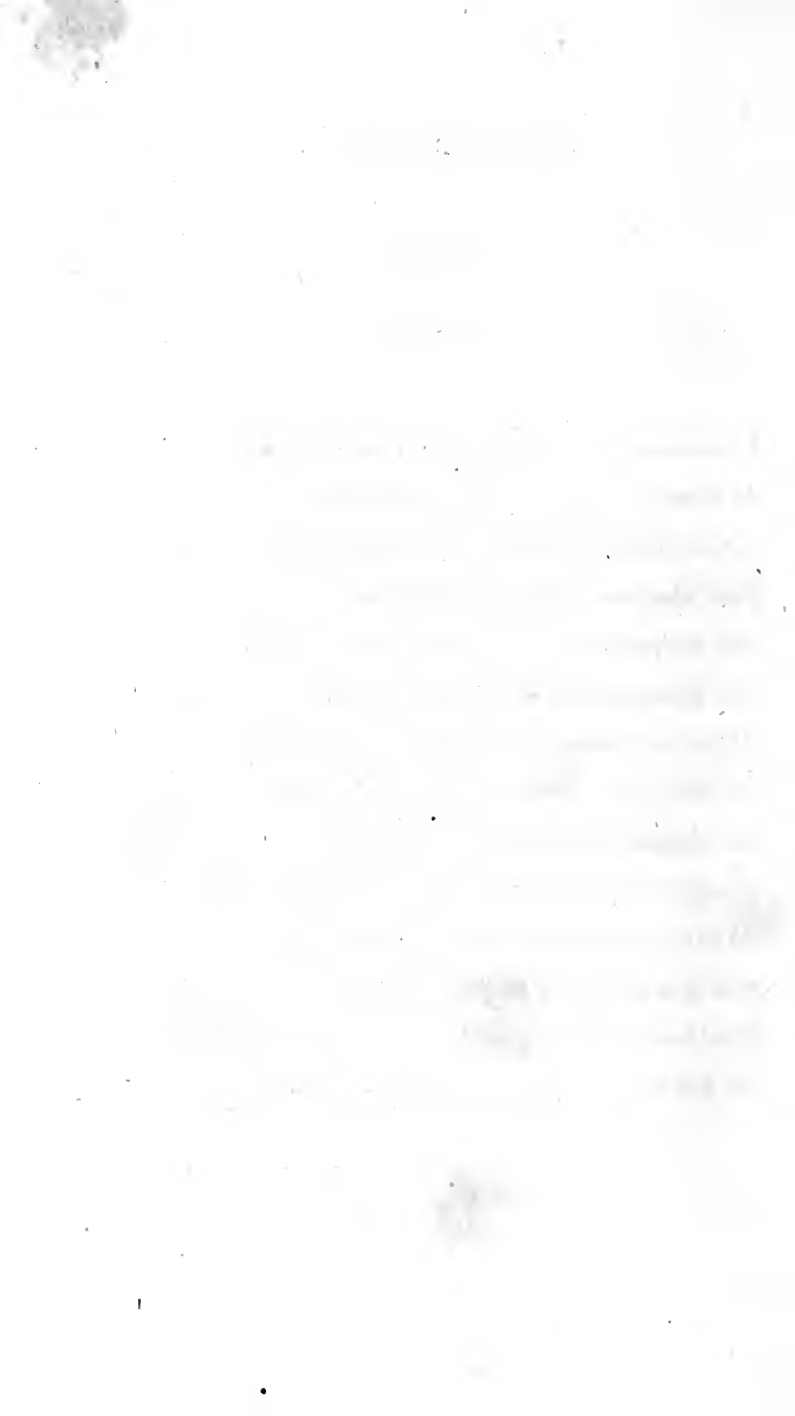
BUT here no cannon thunders to the gale;  
Upon the wave no haughty pendants cast  
A crimson splendour; lowly is the mast  
That rises here, and humbly spread the sail;  
While less disturbed than in the narrow Vale  
Through which with strange vicissitudes he pass'd,  
The Wanderer seeks that receptacle vast  
Where all his unambitious functions fail.  
And may thy Poet, cloud-born Stream! be free,  
The sweets of earth contentedly resigned,  
And each tumultuous working left behind  
At seemly distance, to advance like Thee,  
Prepared, in peace of heart, in calm of mind  
And soul, to mingle with Eternity!



## XXXIII.

## CONCLUSION.

I THOUGHT of Thee, my partner and my guide,  
As being past away. — Vain sympathies !  
For, *backward*, Duddon ! as I cast my eyes,  
I see what was, and is, and will abide ;  
Still glides the Stream, and shall for ever glide ;  
The Form remains, the Function never dies ;  
While *we*, the brave, the mighty, and the wise,  
We Men, who in our morn of youth defied  
The elements, must vanish ; — be it so !  
Enough, if something from our hands have power  
To live, and act, and serve the future hour ;  
And if, as tow'rd the silent tomb we go,  
Thro' love, thro' hope, and faith's transcendant dower,  
We feel that we are greater than we know.



## POSTSCRIPT.

---

A POET, whose works are not yet known as they deserve to be, thus enters upon his description of the "Ruins of Rome,"

" The rising Sun  
Flames on the ruins in the purer air  
Towering aloft ;"

and ends thus,

" The setting Sun displays  
His visible great round, between yon towers,  
As through two shady cliffs."

Mr. Crowe, in his excellent loco-descriptive Poem, "Lewesdon Hill," is still more expeditious, finishing the whole on a May-morning, before breakfast.

" To-morrow for severer thought, but now  
To breakfast, and keep festival to-day."

No one believes, or is desired to believe, that these Poems were actually composed within such limits of time, nor was

there any reason why a prose statement should acquaint the Reader with the plain fact, to the disturbance of poetic credibility. But, in the present case, I am compelled to mention, that the above series of Sonnets was the growth of many years; — the one which stands the 14th was the first produced; and others were added upon occasional visits to the Stream, or as recollections of the scenes upon its banks awakened a wish to describe them. In this manner I had proceeded insensibly, without perceiving that I was trespassing upon ground pre-occupied, at least as far as intention went, by Mr. Coleridge; who, more than twenty years ago, used to speak of writing a rural Poem, to be entitled “The Brook,” of which he has given a sketch in a recent publication. But a particular subject cannot, I think, much interfere with a general one; and I have been further kept from encroaching upon any right Mr. C. may still wish to exercise, by the restriction which the frame of the Sonnet imposed upon me, narrowing unavoidably the range of thought, and precluding, though not without its advantages, many graces to which a freer movement of verse would naturally have led.

May I not venture, then, to hope, that instead of being a hinderance, by anticipation of any part of the subject, these Sonnets may remind Mr. Coleridge of his own more comprehensive design, and induce him to fulfil it? — There is a sympathy in streams, “one calleth to another;” and, I would gladly believe, that “The Brook” will, ere

long, murmur in concert with “The Duddon.” But, asking pardon for this fancy, I need not scruple to say, that those verses must indeed be ill-fated which can enter upon such pleasant walks of nature, without receiving and giving inspiration. The power of waters over the minds of Poets has been acknowledged from the earliest ages; — through the “*Flumina amem sylvas que inglorius*” of Virgil, down to the sublime apostrophe to the great rivers of the earth, by Armstrong, and the simple ejaculation of Burns, (chosen, if I recollect right, by Mr. Coleridge, as a motto for his embryo “Brook”)

“ The Muse nae Poet ever fand her,  
Till by himsel’ he learned to wander,  
Adown some trotting burn’s meander,  
AND NA’ THINK LANG.”



## NOTES.

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### SONNET VI.

“ There bloomed the strawberry of the wilderness,  
The trembling eye-bright showed her sapphire blue.”

THESE two lines are in a great measure taken from “ The Beauties of Spring, a Juvenile Poem,” by the Rev. Joseph Sympson, author of “ The Vision of Alfred,” &c. He was a native of Cumberland, and was educated in the vale of Grasmere, and at Hawkshead school : his poems are little known, but they contain passages of splendid description ; and the versification of his “ Vision of Alfred” is harmonious and animated. The present severe season, with its amusements, reminds me of some lines which I will transcribe as a favourable specimen. In describing the motions of the Sylphs, that constitute the strange machinery of his “ Vision of Alfred,” he uses the following illustrative simile:—

“ glancing from their plumes  
A changeful light the azure vault illumines.

Less varying hues beneath the Pole adorn  
The streamy glories of the Boreal morn,  
That wavering to and fro their radiance shed  
On Bothnia's gulph with glassy ice o'erspread,  
Where the lone native, as he homeward glides,  
On polish'd sandals o'er the imprisoned tides,  
And still the balance of his frame preserves,  
Wheel'd on alternate foot in lengthening curves,  
Sees at a glance, above him and below,  
Two rival heav'ns with equal splendour glow.  
Sphered in the centre of the world he seems,  
For all around with soft effulgence gleams ;  
Stars, moons, and meteors ray oppose to ray,  
And solemn midnight pours the blaze of day."

He was a man of ardent feeling, and his faculties of mind, particularly his memory, were extraordinary. Brief notices of his life ought to find a place in the History of Westmorland.

#### SONNET XVII.

The EAGLE requires a large domain for its support ; but several pairs, not many years ago, were constantly resident in this country, building their nests in the steeps of Borrowdale, Wastdale, Ennerdale, and on the eastern side of Helvellyn. Often have I heard anglers speak of the grandeur of their appearance, as they hovered over Red Tarn, in one



of the coves of this mountain. The bird frequently returns, but is always destroyed. Not long since one visited Rydal Lake, and remained some hours near its banks; the consternation which it occasioned among the different species of fowl, particularly the herons, was expressed by loud screams. The horse also is naturally afraid of the eagle.—There were several Roman stations among these mountains; the most considerable seems to have been in a meadow at the head of Windermere, established, undoubtedly, as a check over the passes of Kirkstone, Dunmail-raise, and of Hardknot and Wrynose. On the margin of Rydal Lake, a coin of Trajan was discovered very lately.—The ROMAN FORT here alluded to, called by the country people "*Hardknot Castle*," is most impressively situated half way down the hill on the right of the road that descends from Hardknot into Eskdale. It has escaped the notice of most antiquarians, and is but slightly mentioned by Lysons.—The DRUIDICAL CIRCLE is about half a mile to the left of the road ascending Stone-side from the vale of Duddon: the country people call it "*Sunken Church*."

The reader who may have been interested in the foregoing Sonnets, (which together may be considered as a Poem,) will not be displeased to find in this place a prose-account of the Duddon, extracted from Green's comprehensive *Guide to the Lakes*, lately published. "The road leading from Coniston to Broughton is over high ground, and commands a view of the river Duddon; which at high water

is a grand sight, having the beautiful and fertile lands of Lancashire and Cumberland stretching each way from its margin. In this extensive view, the face of nature is displayed in a wonderful variety of hill and dale ; wooded grounds and buildings ; amongst the latter, Broughton Tower, seated on the crown of a hill, rising elegantly from the valley, is an object of extraordinary interest. Fertility on each side is gradually diminished, and lost in the superior heights of Blackcomb, in Cumberland, and the high lands between Kirkby and Ulverstone."

" The road from Broughton to Seathwaite is on the banks of the Duddon, and on its Lancashire side it is of various elevations. The river is an amusing companion, one while brawling and tumbling over rocky precipices, until the agitated water becomes again calm by arriving at a smoother and less precipitous bed, but its course is soon again ruffled, and the current thrown into every variety of form which the rocky channel of a river can give to water." (Vide Green's Guide to the Lakes, vol. i. pp. 98—100.)

After all, the traveller would be most gratified who should approach this beautiful Stream, neither at its source, as is done in the Sonnets, nor from its termination ; but from Coniston over Walna Scar ; first descending into a little circular valley, a collateral compartment of the long winding vale through which flows the Duddon. This recess, towards the close of September, when the after-grass of the meadows is still of a fresh green, with the leaves of many of the trees

faded, but perhaps none fallen, is truly enchanting. At a point elevated enough to shew the various objects in the valley, and not so high as to diminish their importance, the stranger will instinctively halt. On the fore-ground, a little below the most favourable station, a rude foot-bridge is thrown over the bed of the noisy brook, foaming by the way-side. Russet and craggy hills, of bold and varied outline, surround the level valley which is besprinkled with grey rocks plumed with birch trees. A few home-steads are interspersed in some places, peeping out from among the rocks like hermitages, whose scite has been chosen for the benefit of sun-shine as well as shelter; in other instances, the dwelling-house, barn, and byer, compose together a cruciform structure, which, with its embowering trees and the ivy clothing part of the walls and roof, like a fleece, call to mind the remains of an ancient abbey. Time, in most cases, and nature every where, have given a sanctity to the humble works of man, that are scattered over this peaceful retirement. Hence a harmony of tone and colour, a perfection and consummation of beauty, which would have been marred had aim or purpose interfered with the course of convenience, utility, or necessity. This unvitiated region stands in no need of the veil of twilight to soften or disguise its features. As it glistens in the morning sunshine, it would fill the spectator's heart with gladsomeness. Looking from our chosen station, he would feel an impatience to rove among its pathways, to be greeted by the milk-maid, to

wander from house to house, exchanging "good-morrows" as he passed the open doors; but, at evening, when the sun is set, and a pearly light gleams from the western quarter of the sky, with an answering light from the smooth surface of the meadows; when the trees are dusky, but each kind still distinguishable; when the cool air has condensed the blue smoke rising from the cottage-chimneys; when the dark mossy stones seem to sleep in the bed of the foaming Brook; *then*, he would be unwilling to move forward, not less from a reluctance to relinquish what he beholds, than from an apprehension of disturbing, by his approach, the quietness beneath him. Issuing from the plain of this valley, the Brook descends in a rapid torrent, passing by the churchyard of Seathwaite. The traveller is thus conducted at once into the midst of the wild and beautiful scenery which gave occasion to the Sonnets from the 14th to the 20th inclusive. From the point where the Seathwaite Brook joins the Duddon, is a view upwards, into the pass through which the River makes its way into the Plain of Donnerdale. The perpendicular rock on the right bears the ancient British name of THE PEN; the one opposite is called WALLA-BARROW CRAG, a name that occurs in several places to designate rocks of the same character. The *chaotic* aspect of the scene is well marked by the expression of a stranger, who strolled out while dinner was preparing, and, at his return, being asked by his host, "What way he had been wandering?" replied, "As far as it is *finished*!"

The bed of the Duddon is here strewn with large fragments of rock fallen from aloft ; which, as Mr. Green truly says, “ are happily adapted to the many-shaped water-falls,” (or rather water-breaks, for none of them are high,) “ displayed in the short space of half a mile.” That there is some hazard in frequenting these desolate places, I myself have had proof ; for one night an immense mass of rock fell upon the very spot where, with a friend, I had lingered the day before. “ The concussion,” says Mr. Green, speaking of the event, (for he also, in the practice of his art, on that day sat exposed for a still longer time to the same peril) “ was heard, not without alarm, by the neighbouring shepherds.” But to return to Seathwaite Church-yard : it contains the following inscription.

“ In memory of the Reverend Robert Walker, who died the 25th of June, 1802, in the 93d year of his age, and 67th of his curacy at Seathwaite.

“ Also, of Anne his wife, who died the 28th of January, in the 93d year of her age.”

In the parish-register of Seathwaite Chapel, is this notice :

“ Buried, June 28th, the Rev. Robert Walker. He was curate of Seathwaite sixty-six years. He was a man singular for his temperance, industry, and integrity.”

This individual is the Pastor alluded to, in the eighteenth Sonnet, as a worthy compeer of the Country Parson of Chaucer, &c. An abstract of his character is given in the

author's poem of *THE EXCURSION*\*; and some account of his life, for it is worthy of being recorded, will not be out of place here.

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### MEMOIR OF THE REV. ROBERT WALKER.

IN the year 1709, Robert Walker was born at Under-Crag, in Seathwaite; he was the youngest of twelve children. His eldest brother, who inherited the small family-estate, died at Under-crag, aged ninety-four, being twenty-four years older than the subject of this Memoir, who was born of the same mother. Robert was a sickly infant; and, through his boyhood and youth continuing to be of delicate frame and tender health, it was deemed best, according to the country phrase, to *breed him a scholar*; for it was not likely that he would be able to earn a livelihood by bodily labour. At that period few of these Dales were furnished with school-houses; the children being taught to read and write in the chapel; and in the same consecrated building, where he officiated for so many years both as preacher and school-master, he himself received the rudiments of his education. In his youth he became schoolmaster at Lowes-water; not being called upon, probably, in that situation, to teach more than reading, writing, and arithmetic. But, by the assist-

ance of a "Gentleman" in the neighbourhood, he acquired, at leisure hours, a knowledge of the classics, and became qualified for taking holy orders. Upon his ordination, he had the offer of two curacies; the one, Torver, in the vale of Coniston, — the other, Seathwaite, in his native vale. The value of each was the same, viz. five pounds per annum: but the cure of Seathwaite having a cottage attached to it, as he wished to marry, he chose it in preference. The young person on whom his affections were fixed, though in the condition of a domestic servant, had given promise, by her serious and modest deportment, and by her virtuous dispositions, that she was worthy to become the help-mate of a man entering upon a plan of life such as he had marked out for himself. By her frugality she had stored up a small sum of money, with which they began housekeeping. In 1735 or 1736, he entered upon his curacy; and, nineteen years afterwards, his situation is thus described, in some letters to be found in the Annual Register for 1760, from which the following is extracted:

To Mr. \_\_\_\_\_.

"SIR,

*Coniston, July 26. 1754.*

"I was the other day upon a party of pleasure, about five or six miles from this place, where I met with a very striking object, and of a nature not very common. Going into a clergyman's house (of whom I had frequently heard) I found him sitting at the head of a long square table, such as is commonly used in this country by the lower class of people;

dressed in a coarse blue frock, trimmed with black horn buttons; a checked shirt, a leathern strap about his neck for a stock, a coarse apron, and a pair of great wooden-soled shoes, plated with iron to preserve them, (what we call clogs in these parts,) with a child upon his knee eating his breakfast; his wife, and the remainder of his children; were some of them employed in waiting on each other, the rest in teasing and spinning wool, at which trade he is a great proficient; and moreover, when it is made ready for sale, will lay it by sixteen, or thirty-two pounds weight, upon his back, and on foot, seven or eight miles will carry it to the market, even in the depth of winter. I was not much surprised at all this, as you may possibly be, having heard a great deal of it related before. But I must confess myself astonished with the alacrity and the good humour that appeared both in the clergyman and his wife, and more so, at the sense and ingenuity of the clergyman himself." \* \*

Then follows a letter, from another person, dated 1755, from which an extract shall be given.

"By his frugality and good management, he keeps the wolf from the door, as we say; and if he advances a little in the world, it is owing more to his own care, than to any thing else he has to rely upon. I don't find his inclination is running after further preferment. He is settled among the people, that are happy among themselves; and lives in the greatest unanimity and friendship with them; and, I believe,



the minister and people are exceedingly satisfied with each other; and indeed how should they be dissatisfied, when they have a person of so much worth and probity for their pastor? A man, who, for his candour and meekness, his sober, chaste, and virtuous conversation, his soundness in principle and practice, is an ornament to his profession, and an honour to the country he is in; and bear with me if I say, the plainness of his dress, the sanctity of his manners, the simplicity of his doctrine, and the vehemence of his expression, have a sort of resemblance to the pure practice of primitive Christianity."

We will now give his own account of himself, to be found in the same place.

From the Rev. ROBERT WALKER.

"SIR,

"Yours of the 26th instant was communicated to me by Mr. C—, and I should have returned an immediate answer, but the hand of Providence then lying heavy upon an amiable pledge of conjugal endearment, hath since taken from me a promising girl, which the disconsolate mother too pensively laments the loss of; though we have yet eight living, all healthful, hopeful children, whose names and ages are as follows: Zaccheus, aged almost eighteen years; Elizabeth, sixteen years and ten months; Mary, fifteen; Moses, thirteen years and three months; Sarah, ten years and three months; Mabel, eight years and three months; William

Tyson, three years and eight months; and Anne Esther, one year and three months: besides Anne who died two years and six months ago, and was then aged between nine and ten; and Eleanor, who died the 23d inst., January, aged six years and ten months. Zaccheus, the eldest child, is now learning the trade of tanner, and has two years and a half of his apprenticeship to serve. The annual income of my chapel at present, as near as I can compute it, may amount to about 17*l.* 10*s.* of which is paid in cash, viz. 5*l.* from the bounty of Queen Anne, and 5*l.* from W. P. Esq. of P—, out of the annual rents, he being lord of the manor, and 3*l.* from the several inhabitants of L—, settled upon the tenements as a rent-charge; the house and gardens I value at 4*l.* yearly, and not worth more; and, I believe the surplice fees and voluntary contributions, one year with another, may be worth 3*l.*; but, as the inhabitants are few in number, and the fees very low, this last-mentioned sum consists merely in free-will offerings.

“ I am situated greatly to my satisfaction with regard to the conduct and behaviour of my auditory, who not only live in the happy ignorance of the follies and vices of the age, but in mutual peace and good-will with one another, and are seemingly (I hope really too) sincere Christians, and sound members of the established church, not one dissenter of any denomination being amongst them all. I got to the value of 40*l.* for my wife's fortune, but had no real estate of my own, being the youngest son of twelve children, born of obscure

parents; and though my income has been but small, and my family large, yet, by a providential blessing upon my own diligent endeavours, the kindness of friends, and a cheap country to live in, we have always had the necessaries of life. By what I have written (which is a true and exact account to the best of my knowledge) I hope you will not think your favour to me, out of the late worthy Dr. Stratford's effects, quite mis-bestowed, for which I must ever gratefully own myself, Sir,

"Your much obliged and most obedient humble Servant,  
"R. W., Curate of S—.  
"To Mr. C., of Lancaster."

About the time when this letter was written, the Bishop of Chester recommended the scheme of joining the curacy of Ulpha to the contiguous one of Seathwaite, and the nomination was offered to Mr. Walker; but an unexpected difficulty arising, Mr. W. in a letter to the Bishop, (a copy of which, in his own beautiful hand-writing, now lies before me,) thus expresses himself: "If he," meaning the person in whom the difficulty originated, "had suggested any such objection before, I should utterly have declined any attempt to the curacy of Ulpha; indeed, I was always apprehensive it might be disagreeable to my auditory at Seathwaite, as they have been always accustomed to double duty, and the inhabitants of Ulpha despair of being able to support a school-master who is not curate there also; which suppressed all

thoughts in me of serving them both." And in a second letter to the Bishop he writes :

" MY LORD,

" I have the favour of yours of the 1st inst., and am exceedingly obliged on account of the Ulpha affair: if that curacy should lapse into your Lordship's hands, I would beg leave rather to decline than embrace it; for the chapels of Seathwaite and Ulpha annexed together, would be apt to cause a general discontent among the inhabitants of both places; by either thinking themselves slighted, being only served alternately, or neglected in the duty, or attributing it to covetousness in me; all which occasions of murmuring I would willingly avoid." And in concluding his former letter, he expresses a similar sentiment upon the same occasion, "desiring, if it be possible, however, as much as in me lieth, to live peaceably with all men."

The year following, the curacy of Seathwaite was again augmented; and to effect this augmentation, fifty pounds had been advanced by himself; and in 1760, lands were purchased with eight hundred pounds. Scanty as was his income, the frequent offer of much better benefices could not tempt Mr. W. to quit a situation where he had been so long happy, with a consciousness of being useful. Among his papers I find the following copy of a letter, dated 1775, twenty years after his refusal of the curacy of Ulpha, which will show what exertions had been made for one of his sons.

“ MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,

“ Our remote situation here makes it difficult to get the necessary information for transacting business regularly ; such is the reason of my giving your Grace the present trouble.

“ The bearer (my son) is desirous of offering himself candidate for deacon's orders, at your Grace's ensuing ordination ; the first, on the 25th inst. so that his papers could not be transmitted in due time. As he is now fully at age, and I have afforded him education to the utmost of my ability, it would give me great satisfaction (if your Grace would take him, and find him qualified) to have him ordained. His constitution has been tender for some years ; he entered the college of Dublin, but his health would not permit him to continue there, or I would have supported him much longer. He has been with me at home above a year, in which time he has gained great strength of body, sufficient, I hope, to enable him for performing the function. Divine Providence, assisted by liberal benefactors, has blest my endeavours, from a small income, to rear a numerous family ; and as my time of life renders me now unfit for much future expectancy from this world, I should be glad to see my son settled in a promising way to acquire an honest livelihood for himself. His behaviour, so far in life, has been irreproachable ; and I hope he will not degenerate, in principles or practice, from the precepts and pattern of an indulgent parent. Your Grace's favourable reception of this, from a

distant corner of the diocese, and an obscure hand, will excite filial gratitude, and a due use shall be made of the obligation vouchsafed thereby to

“ Your Grace’s very dutiful and most obedient

“ Son and Servant,

“ ROBERT WALKER.”

The same man, who was thus liberal in the education of his numerous family, was even munificent in hospitality as a parish priest. Every Sunday, were served, upon the long table, at which he has been described sitting with a child upon his knee, messes of broth, for the refreshment of those of his congregation who came from a distance, and usually took their seats as parts of his own household. It seems scarcely possible that this custom could have commenced before the augmentation of his cure; and, what would to many have been a high price of self-denial, was paid, by the pastor and his family, for this gratification; as the treat could only be provided by dressing at one time the whole, perhaps, of their weekly allowance of fresh animal food; consequently, for a succession of days, the table was covered with cold victuals only. His generosity in old age may be still further illustrated by a little circumstance relating to an orphan grandson, then ten years of age, which I find in a copy of a letter to one of his sons; he requests that half-a-guinea may be left for “little Robert’s pocket-money,” who was then at school; entrusting it to the care of a lady, who, as he says,

“ may sometimes frustrate his squandering it away foolishly,” and promising to send him an equal allowance annually for the same purpose. The conclusion of the same letter is so characteristic, that I cannot forbear to transcribe it. “ We,” meaning his wife and himself, “ are in our wonted state of health, allowing for the hasty strides of old age knocking daily at our door, and threateningly telling us, we are not only mortal, but must expect ere long to take our leave of our ancient cottage, and lie down in our last dormitory. Pray pardon my neglect to answer yours : let us hear sooner from you, to augment the mirth of the Christmas holidays. Wishing you all the pleasures of the approaching season, I am, dear Son, with lasting sincerity, yours affectionately,

“ ROBERT WALKER.”

He loved old customs and usages, and in some instances stuck to them to his own loss ; for, having had a sum of money lodged in the hands of a neighbouring tradesman, when long course of time had raised the rate of interest ; and more was offered, he refused to accept it ; an act not difficult to one, who, while he was drawing seventeen pounds a-year from his curacy, declined, as we have seen, to add the profits of another small benefice to his own, lest he should be suspected of cupidity.— From this vice he was utterly free ; he made no charge for teaching school ; such as could afford to pay, gave him what they pleased. When very young, having kept a diary of his expenses however trifling, the large amount, at the end of the year, surprised him ;

and from that time the rule of his life was to be œconomical, not avaricious. At his decease he left behind him no less a sum than £2000. and such a sense of his various excellences was prevalent in the country, that the epithet of WONDERFUL is to this day attached to his name.

There is in the above sketch something so extraordinary as to require further *explanatory* details. — And to begin with his industry; eight hours in each day, during five days in the week, and half of Saturday, except when the labours of husbandry were urgent, he was occupied in teaching. His seat was within the rails of the altar; the communion-table was his desk; and, like Shenstone's school-mistress, the master employed himself at the spinning-wheel, while the children were repeating their lessons by his side. Every evening, after school hours, if not more profitably engaged, he continued the same kind of labour, exchanging, for the benefit of exercise, the small wheel, at which he had sate, for the large one on which wool is spun, the spinner stepping to and fro. — Thus, was the wheel constantly in readiness to prevent the waste of a moment's time. Nor was his industry with the pen, when occasion called for it, less eager. Entrusted with extensive management of public and private affairs, he acted in his rustic neighbourhood as scrivener, writing out petitions, deeds of conveyance, wills, covenants, &c. with pecuniary gain to himself, and to the great benefit of his employers. These labours (at all times considerable) at one period of the year, viz. be-



tween Christmas and Candlemas, when money transactions are settled in this country, were often so intense, that he passed great part of the night, and sometimes whole nights, at his desk. His garden also was tilled by his own hand; he had a right of pasturage upon the mountains for a few sheep and a couple of cows, which required his attendance; with this pastoral occupation, he joined the labours of husbandry upon a small scale, renting two or three acres in addition to his own less than one acre of glebe; and the humblest drudgery which the cultivation of these fields required was performed by himself.

He also assisted his neighbours in hay-making and shearing their flocks, and in the performance of this latter service he was eminently dexterous. They, in their turn, complimented him with a present of a hay-cock, or a fleece; less as a recompence for this particular service than as a general acknowledgment. The Sabbath was in a strict sense kept holy; the Sunday evenings being devoted to reading the Scripture and family prayer. The principal festivals appointed by the Church were also duly observed; but through every other day in the week, through every week in the year, he was incessantly occupied in work of hand or mind; not allowing a moment for recreation, except upon a Saturday afternoon, when he indulged himself with a Newspaper, or sometimes with a Magazine. The frugality and temperance established in his house, were as admirable as the industry. Nothing to which the name of luxury

could be given was there known; in the latter part of his life, indeed, when tea had been brought into almost general use, it was provided for visitors, and for such of his own family as returned occasionally to his roof, and had been accustomed to this refreshment elsewhere; but neither he nor his wife ever partook of it. The raiment worn by his family was comely and decent, but as simple as their diet; the home-spun materials were made up into apparel by their own hands. At the time of the decease of this thrifty pair, their cottage contained a large store of webs of woollen and linen cloth, woven from thread of their own spinning. And it is remarkable, that the pew in the chapel in which the family used to sit, remained a few years ago neatly lined with woollen cloth spun by the pastor's own hands. It is the only pew in the chapel so distinguished; and I know of no other instance of his conformity to the delicate accommodations of modern times. The fuel of the house, like that of their neighbours, consisted of peat, procured from the mosses by their own labour. The lights by which in the winter evenings their work was performed, were of their own manufacture, such as still continue to be used in these cottages; they are made of the pith of rushes dipped in any unctuous substance that the house affords. *White* candles, as tallow candles are here called, were reserved to honour the Christmas festivals, and were perhaps produced upon no other occasions. Once a month, during the proper season, a sheep was drawn from their small mountain flock, and

killed for the use of the family ; and a cow, towards the close of the year, was salted and dried, for winter provision : the hide was tanned to furnish them with shoes. — By these various resources, this venerable clergyman reared a numerous family, not only preserving them, as he affectingly says, “ from wanting the necessaries of life ;” but afforded them an unstinted education, and the means of raising themselves in society.

It might have been concluded that no one could thus, as it were, have converted his body into a machine of industry for the humblest uses, and kept his thoughts so frequently bent upon secular concerns, without grievous injury to the more precious parts of his nature. How could the powers of intellect thrive, or its graces be displayed, in the midst of circumstances apparently so unfavourable, and where, to the direct cultivation of the mind, so small a portion of time was allotted ? But, in this extraordinary man, things in their nature adverse were reconciled ; his conversation was remarkable, not only for being chaste and pure, but for the degree in which it was fervent and eloquent ; his written style was correct, simple, and animated. Nor did his *affections* suffer more than his intellect ; he was tenderly alive to all the duties of his pastoral office : the poor and needy “ he never sent empty away,” — the stranger was fed and refreshed in passing that unfrequented vale, — the sick were visited ; and the feelings of humanity found further exercise among the distresses and embarrassments in the worldly estate of his

neighbours, with which his talents for business made him acquainted ; and the disinterestedness, impartiality, and uprightness which he maintained in the management of all affairs confided to him, were virtues seldom separated in his own conscience from religious obligations. Nor could such conduct fail to remind those who witnessed it of a spirit nobler than law or custom : they felt convictions which, but for such intercourse, could not have been afforded, that, as in the practice of their pastor, there was no guile, so in his faith there was nothing hollow ; and we are warranted in believing that, upon these occasions, selfishness, obstinacy, and discord would often give way before the breathings of his good-will and saintly integrity. It may be presumed also, while his humble congregation were listening to the moral precepts which he delivered from the pulpit, and to the Christian exhortations that they should love their neighbour as themselves, and do as they would be done unto, that peculiar efficacy was given to the preacher's labours by recollections in the minds of his congregation, that they were called upon to do no more than his own actions were daily setting before their eyes.

The afternoon service in the chapel was less numerously attended than that of the morning, but by a more serious auditory ; the lesson from the New Testament, on those occasions, was accompanied by Birkett's Commentaries. These lessons he read with impassioned emphasis, frequently drawing tears from his hearers, and leaving a lasting impression upon

their minds. His devotional feelings and the powers of his own mind were further exercised, along with those of his family, in perusing the Scriptures ; not only on the Sunday evenings, but on every other evening, while the rest of the household were at work, some one of the children, and in her turn the servant, for the sake of practice in reading, or for instruction, read the Bible aloud ; and in this manner the whole was repeatedly gone through. That no common importance was attached to the observance of religious ordinances by his family, appears from the following memorandum by one of his descendants, which I am tempted to insert at length, as it is characteristic, and somewhat curious. “ There is a small chapel, in the county palatine of Lancaster, where a certain clergyman has regularly officiated above sixty years, and a few months ago administered the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper in the same, to a decent number of devout communicants. After the clergyman had received himself, the first company out of the assembly who approached the altar, and kneeled down to be partakers of the sacred elements, consisted of the parson’s wife, to whom he had been married upwards of sixty years : one son and his wife ; four daughters, each with her husband ; whose ages all added together amount to above 714 years. The several and respective distances from the place of each of their abodes to the chapel where they all communicated, will measure more than 1000 English miles. Though the narration will appear surprising, it is without doubt a fact, that the same persons,

exactly four years before, met at the same place, and all joined in performance of the same venerable duty."

He was indeed most zealously attached to the doctrine and frame of the Established Church. We have seen him congratulating himself that he had no dissenters in his cure of any denomination. Some allowance must be made for the state of opinion when his first religious impressions were received, before the reader will acquit him of bigotry, when I mention, that at the time of the augmentation of the cure, he refused to invest part of the money in the purchase of an estate offered to him upon advantageous terms, because the proprietor was a Quaker; — whether from scrupulous apprehension that a blessing would not attend a contract framed for the benefit of the Church between persons not in religious sympathy with each other; or, as a seeker of peace, he was afraid of the uncomplying disposition which at one time was too frequently conspicuous in that sect. Of this an instance had fallen under his own notice; for, while he taught school at Loweswater, certain persons of that denomination had refused to pay, or be distrained upon, for the accustomed annual interest due from them, among others, under the title of church stock; a great hardship upon the incumbent, for the curacy of Loweswater was then scarcely less poor than that of Seathwaite. To what degree this prejudice of his was blameable need not be determined; — certain it is, that he was not only desirous, as he himself says, to live in peace, but in love, with all men. He was placable, and

charitable in his judgments ; and, however correct in conduct and rigorous to himself, he was ever ready to forgive the trespasses of others, and to soften the censure that was cast upon their frailties.—It would be unpardonable to omit that, in the maintenance of his virtues, he received due support from the Partner of his long life. She was equally strict in attending to her share of their joint cares, nor less diligent in her appropriate occupations. A person who had been some time their servant in the latter part of their lives, concluded the panegyric of her mistress by saying to me, “ she was no less excellent than her husband ; she was good to the poor, she was good to every thing ! ” He survived for a short time this virtuous companion. When she died, he ordered that her body should be borne to the grave by three of her daughters and one granddaughter ; and, when the corpse was lifted from the threshold, he insisted upon lending his aid, and feeling about, for he was then almost blind, took hold of a napkin fixed to the coffin ; and, as a bearer of the body, entered the Chapel, a few steps from the lowly Parsonage.

What a contrast does the life of this obscurely-seated, and, in point of worldly wealth, poorly-repaid Churchman, present to that of a Cardinal Wolsey !

“ O ’tis a burthen, Cromwell, ’tis a burthen

Too heavy for a man who hopes for heaven ! ”

We have been dwelling upon images of peace in the moral world, that have brought us again to the quiet enclosure of consecrated ground, in which this venerable pair lie interred. The sounding brook, that rolls close by the church-yard without disturbing feeling or meditation, is now unfortunately laid bare; but not long ago it participated, with the chapel, the shade of some stately ash-trees, which will not spring again. While the spectator from this spot is looking round upon the girdle of stony mountains that encompasses the vale, — masses of rock, out of which monuments for all men that ever existed might have been hewn, it would surprise him to be told, as with truth he might be, that the plain blue slab dedicated to the memory of this aged pair, is a production of a quarry in North Wales. It was sent as a mark of respect by one of their descendants from the vale of Festiniog, a region almost as beautiful as that in which it now lies!

Upon the Seathwaite Brook, at a small distance from the Parsonage, has been erected a mill for spinning yarn; it is a mean and disagreeable object, though not unimportant to the spectator, as calling to mind the momentous changes wrought by such inventions in the frame of society — changes which have proved especially unfavourable to these mountain solitudes. So much had been effected by those new powers, before the subject of the preceding biographical sketch closed his life, that their operation could not escape his notice, and doubtless excited touching reflections upon



the comparatively insignificant results of his own manual industry. But Robert Walker was not a man of times and circumstances; had he lived at a later period, the principle of duty would have produced application as unremitting; the same energy of character would have been displayed, though in many instances with widely-different effects.

Having mentioned in this narrative the vale of Lowes-water as a place where Mr. Walker taught school, I will add a few memorandums from its parish register, respecting a person apparently of desires as moderate, with whom he must have been intimate during his residence there.

“ Let him that would, ascend the tottering seat  
Of courtly grandeur, and become as great  
As are his mounting wishes; but for me,  
Let sweet repose and rest my portion be.

HENRY FOREST, Curate.

Honour, the idol which the most adore,  
Receives no homage from my knee;  
Content in privacy I value more  
Than all uneasy dignity.

Henry Forest came to Lowes-water, 1708, being 25 years of age.”

“ This Curacy was twice augmented by Queen Anne’s bounty. The first payment, with great difficulty, was paid

to Mr. John Curwen of London, on the 9th of May, 1724, deposited by me, Henry Forest, Curate of Lowes-water. Y<sup>c</sup> said 9th of May, y<sup>c</sup> said Mr. Curwen went to the office and saw my name registered there, &c. This, by the Providence of God, came by lot to this poor place.

Hæc testor H. Forest."

In another place he records, that the sycamore trees were planted in the church-yard in 1710.

He died in 1741, having been curate thirty-four years. It is not improbable that H. Forest was the gentleman who assisted Robert Walker in his classical studies at Lowes-water.

To this parish register is prefixed a motto, of which the following verses are a part.

"Invigilate viri, tacito nam tempora gressu  
Diffugiunt, nulloque sono convertitur annus;  
Utendum est etate, cito pede præterit ætas."

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#### SONNET XXXIII.

"We feel that we are greater than we know."

"And feel that I am happier than I know."—MILTON.

The allusion to the Greek Poet will be obvious to the classical reader.

**VAUDRACOUR AND JULIA.**

*The following was written as an Episode, in a work from which its length may perhaps exclude it. The facts are true; no invention as to these has been exercised, as none was needed.*

## VAUDRACOUR AND JULIA.

---

O happy time of youthful lovers, (thus  
My story may begin) O balmy time,  
In which a love-knot on a lady's brow  
Is fairer than the fairest star in heaven !  
To such inheritance of blessed fancy  
(Fancy that sports more desperately with minds  
Than ever fortune hath been known to do)  
The high-born Vaudracour was brought, by years  
Whose progress had a little overstepped  
His stripling prime. A town of small repute,  
Among the vine-clad mountains of Auvergne,  
Was the Youth's birth-place. There he woo'd a Maid  
Who heard the heart-felt music of his suit  
With answering vows. Plebeian was the stock,

Plebeian, though ingenuous, the stock,  
From which her graces and her honours sprung;  
And hence the father of the enamoured Youth,  
With haughty indignation, spurn'd the thought  
Of such alliance. — From their cradles up,  
With but a step between their several homes,  
Twins had they been in pleasure; after strife  
And petty quarrels, had grown fond again;  
Each other's advocate, each other's stay;  
And strangers to content if long apart,  
Or more divided than a sportive pair  
Of sea-fowl, conscious both that they are hovering  
Within the eddy of a common blast,  
Or hidden only by the concave depth  
Of neighbouring billows from each other's sight.

Thus, not without concurrence of an age  
Unknown to memory, was an earnest given,  
By ready nature, for a life of love,  
For endless constancy and placid truth;  
But whatso'er of such rare treasure lay  
Reserved, had fate permitted, for support

Of their maturer years, his present mind  
Was under fascination ; — he beheld  
A vision, and adored the thing he saw.  
Arabian fiction never filled the world  
With half the wonders that were wrought for him.  
Earth breathed in one great presence of the spring ;  
Life turn'd the meanest of her implements,  
Before his eyes, to price above all gold ;  
The house she dwelt in was a sainted shrine ;  
Her chamber window did surpass in glory  
The portals of the dawn ; all paradise  
Could, by the simple opening of a door,  
Let itself in upon him ; pathways, walks,  
Swarm'd with enchantment, till his spirit sank  
Surcharged within him, — overblest to move  
Beneath a sun that wakes a weary world  
To its dull round of ordinary cares ;  
A man too happy for mortality !

So passed the time, till, whether through effect  
Of some unguarded moment that dissolved  
Virtuous restraint — ah, speak it, think it not !

Deem rather that the fervent Youth, who saw  
So many bars between his present state  
And the dear haven where he wished to be  
In honourable wedlock with his Love,  
Was inwardly prepared to turn aside  
From law and custom, and entrust his cause  
To nature for a happy end of all ;  
Deem that by such fond hope the Youth was swayed,  
And bear with their transgression, when I add  
That Julia, wanting yet the name of wife,  
Carried about her for a secret grief  
The promise of a mother.

To conceal  
The threatened shame, the parents of the Maid  
Found means to hurry her away by night  
And unforewarned, that in some distant spot  
She might remain shrouded in privacy,  
Until the babe was born. When morning came  
The Lover, thus bereft, stung with his loss,  
And all uncertain whither he should turn,  
Chaf'd like a wild beast in the toils ; but soon



Discovering traces of the fugitives,  
Their steps he followed to the Maid's retreat.  
The sequel may be easily divined, —  
Walks to and fro — watchings at every hour ;  
And the fair Captive, who, whene'er she may,  
Is busy at her casement as the swallow  
Fluttering its pinions, almost within reach,  
About the pendant nest ; did thus espy  
Her Lover ; — thence a stolen interview,  
Accomplished under friendly shade of night.

I pass the raptures of the Pair ; — such theme  
Is, by innumerable poets, touched  
In more delightful verse than skill of mine  
Could fashion, chiefly by that darling bard  
Who told of Juliet and her Romeo,  
And of the lark's note heard before its time,  
And of the streaks that laced the severing clouds  
In the unrelenting east. — Through all her courts  
The vacant City slept ; the busy winds,  
That keep no certain intervals of rest,  
Mov'd not ; meanwhile the galaxy display'd

Her fires, that like mysterious pulses beat  
Aloft; — momentous but uneasy bliss !  
To their full hearts the universe seemed hung  
On that brief meeting's slender filament !

They parted; and the generous Vaudracour  
Reached speedily the native threshold, bent  
On making (so the Lovers had agreed)  
A sacrifice of birth-right, to attain  
A final portion from his Father's hand;  
Which granted, Bride and Bridegroom then would flee  
To some remote and solitary place,  
Shady as night and beautiful as heaven,  
Where they may live, with no one to behold  
Their happiness, or to disturb their love.  
But *now* of this no whisper; not the less,  
If ever an obtrusive word were dropped  
Touching the matter of his passion, still,  
In his stern Father's hearing, Vaudracour  
Persisted openly that death alone  
Should abrogate his human privilege  
Divine, of swearing everlasting truth,  
Upon the altar, to the Maid he loved.

“ You shall be baffled in your mad intent  
 If there be justice in the Court of France,”  
 Muttered the Father. — From this time the Youth  
 Conceived a terror, — and, by night or day,  
 Stirred no where without arms. To their rural seat,  
 Meanwhile, his Parents artfully withdrew  
 Upon some feigned occasion, and the Son  
 Remained with one attendant. At midnight  
 When to his chamber he retired, attempt  
 Was made to seize him by three armed men,  
 Acting, in furtherance of the Father’s will,  
 Under a private signet of the State.  
 One, did the Youth’s ungovernable hand  
 Assault and slay ; — and to a second gave  
 A perilous wound, — he shuddered to behold  
 The breathless corse ; then peacefully resigned  
 His person to the law, was lodged in prison,  
 And wore the fetters of a criminal.

Have you beheld a tuft of winged seed  
 That, from the dandelion’s naked stalk  
 Mounted aloft, is suffered not to use

Its natural gifts for purposes of rest,  
Driven by the autumnal whirlwind to and fro  
Through the wide element? or have you marked  
The heavier substance of a leaf-clad bough,  
Within the vortex of a foaming flood,  
Tormented? by such aid you may conceive  
The perturbation of each mind; — ah, no!  
Desperate the Maid, — the Youth is stained with blood!  
But as the troubled seed and tortured bough  
Is man, subjected to despotic sway.

For him, by private influence with the Court,  
Was pardon gained, and liberty procured;  
But not without exaction of a pledge  
Which liberty and love dispersed in air.  
He flew to her from whom they would divide him —  
He clove to her who could not give him peace —  
Yea, his first word of greeting was, — “ All right  
Is gone from me; my lately-towering hopes,  
To the least fibre of their lowest root,  
Are withered; — thou no longer canst be mine,

I thine — the conscience-stricken must not woo  
The unruffled Innocent, — I see thy face,  
Behold thee, and my misery is complete !”

“ One, are we not ?” exclaim’d the Maiden — “ One,  
For innocence and youth, for weal and woe ?”

Then, with the Father’s name she coupled words

Of vehement indignation ; but the Youth

Check’d her with filial meekness ; for no thought

Uncharitable, no presumptuous rising

Of hasty censure, modelled in the eclipse

Of true domestic loyalty, did e’er

Find place within his bosom. — Once again

The persevering wedge of tyranny

Achieved their separation ; — and once more

Were they united, — to be yet again,

Disparted — pitiable lot ! But here

A portion of the Tale may well be left

In silence, though my memory could add

Much how the Youth, in scanty space of time,

Was traversed from without ; much, too, of thoughts

That occupied his days in solitude  
Under privation and restraint; and what,  
Through dark and shapeless fear of things to come,  
And what, through strong compunction for the past,  
He suffered — breaking down in heart and mind!

Doomed to a third and last captivity,  
His freedom he recovered on the eve  
Of Julia's travail. When the babe was born  
Its presence tempted him to cherish schemes  
Of future happiness. "You shall return,  
Julia," said he, "and to your Father's house  
Go with the Child. — You have been wretched, yet  
The silver shower, whose reckless burthen weighs  
Too heavily upon the lily's head,  
Oft leaves a saving moisture at its root.  
Malice, beholding you, will melt away.  
Go! — 'tis a Town where both of us were born;  
None will reproach you, for our truth is known;  
And if, amid those once-bright bowers, our fate  
Remain unpitied, pity is not in man.  
With ornaments — the prettiest, nature yields

Or art can fashion, shall you deck your Boy,  
 And feed his countenance with your own sweet looks  
 Till no one can resist him. — Now, even now,  
 I see him sporting on the sunny lawn ;  
 My Father from the window sees him too ;  
 Startled, as if some new-created Thing  
 Enriched the earth, or Faery of the woods  
 Bounded before him ; — but the unweeting Child  
 Shall by his beauty win his Grandsire's heart  
 So that it shall be softened, and our loves  
 End happily — as they began !” These gleams  
 Appeared but seldom : oftener was he seen  
 Propping a pale and melancholy face  
 Upon the Mother's bosom ; resting thus  
 His head upon one breast, while from the other  
 The Babe was drawing in its quiet food.  
 — That pillow is no longer to be thine,  
 Fond Youth ! that mournful solace now must pass  
 Into the list of things that cannot be !  
 Unwedded Julia, terror-smitten, hears  
 The sentence, by her Mother's lip pronounced,

That dooms her to a Convent. — Who shall tell,  
Who dares report, the tidings to the Lord  
Of her affections? So they blindly asked  
Who knew not to what quiet depths a weight  
Of agony had press'd the sufferer down; —  
The word, by others dreaded, he can hear  
Composed and silent, without visible sign  
Of even the least emotion. Noting this  
When the impatient Object of his love  
Upbraided him with slackness, he returned  
No answer, only took the Mother's hand  
And kissed it — seemingly devoid of pain,  
Or care, that what so tenderly he pressed,  
Was a dependant upon the obdurate heart  
Of One who came to disunite their lives  
For ever—sad alternative! preferred,  
By the unbending Parents of the Maid,  
To secret 'spousals meanly disavowed. —  
— So be it!

In the city he remained  
A season after Julia had withdrawn



To those religious walls. He, too, departs —  
 Who with him? — even the senseless Little-one!  
 With that sole Charge he pass'd the city-gates  
 For the last time, attendant by the side  
 Of a close chair, a litter, or sedan,  
 In which the Babe was carried. To a hill,  
 That rose a brief league distant from the town,  
 The Dwellers in that house where he had lodged  
 Accompanied his steps, by anxious love  
 Impell'd: — they parted from him there, and stood  
 Watching below, till he had disappeared  
 On the hill-top. His eyes he scarcely took,  
 Throughout that journey, from the vehicle  
 (Slow-moving ark of all his hopes!) that veiled  
 The tender Infant: and at every inn,  
 And under every hospitable tree  
 At which the Bearers halted or reposed,  
 Laid him with timid care upon his knees,  
 And looked, as mothers ne'er were known to look,  
 Upon the Nursling which his arms embraced.  
 — This was the manner in which Vaudracour

Departed with his Infant; and thus reached  
His Father's house, where to the innocent Child  
Admittance was denied. The young Man spake  
No words of indignation or reproof,  
But of his Father begged, a last request,  
That a retreat might be assigned to him  
Where in forgotten quiet he might dwell,  
With such allowance as his wants required;  
For wishes he had none. To a Lodge that stood  
Deep in a forest, with leave given, at the age  
Of four-and-twenty summers he withdrew;  
And thither took with him his infant Babe,  
And one Domestic, for their common needs,  
An aged Woman. It consoled him here  
To attend upon the Orphan, and perform  
Obsequious service to the precious Child,  
Which, after a short time, by some mistake,  
Or indiscretion of the Father, died. —  
The Tale I follow to its last recess  
Of suffering or of peace, I know not which;  
Theirs be the blame who caused the woe, not mine!

From this time forth he never shared a smile  
 With mortal creature. An Inhabitant  
 Of that same Town, in which the Pair had left  
 So lively a remembrance of their griefs,  
 By chance of business, coming within reach  
 Of his retirement, to the spot repaired  
 With an intent to visit him. He reached  
 The house, and only found the Matron there,  
 Who told him that his pains were thrown away,  
 For that her Master never uttered word  
 To living Thing — not even to her. — Behold !  
 While they were speaking, Vaudracour approached ;  
 But, seeing some one near, even as his hand  
 Was stretched towards the garden gate, he shrunk —  
 And, like a shadow, glided out of view.  
 Shocked at his savage aspect, from the place  
 The Visitor retired.

Thus lived the Youth  
 Cut off from all intelligence with man,  
 And shunning even the light of common day ;  
 Nor could the voice of Freedom, which through France

Full speedily resounded, public hope,  
Or personal memory of his own deep wrongs,  
Rouse him : but in those solitary shades  
His days he wasted, an imbecile mind !

ADDRESSED TO ———,

ON THE LONGEST DAY.

---

LET us quit the leafy Arbour,  
And the torrent murmuring by;  
Sol has dropped into his harbour,  
Weary of the open sky.

Evening now unbinds the fetters  
Fashioned by the glowing light;  
All that breathe are thankful debtors  
To the harbinger of night.

Yet by some grave thoughts attended  
Eve renews her calm career;  
For the day that now is ended,  
Is the Longest of the Year.

Laura ! sport, as now thou sportest,  
 On this platform, light and free ;  
 Take thy bliss, while longest, shortest,  
 Are indifferent to thee !

Who would check the happy feeling  
 That inspires the linnet's song ?  
 Who would stop the swallow wheeling  
 On her pinions swift and strong ?

Yet, at this impressive season,  
 Words, which tenderness can speak  
 From the truths of homely reason,  
 Might exalt the loveliest cheek ;

And, while shades to shades succeeding  
 Steal the landscape from the sight,  
 I would urge this moral pleading,  
 Last forerunner of " Good night ! "

SUMMER ebbs ; — each day that follows  
 Is a reflux from on high,  
 Tending to the darksome hollows  
 Where the frosts of winter lie.

He who governs the creation,  
 In his providence assigned  
 Such a gradual declination  
 To the life of human kind.

Yet we mark it not ; — fruits redden,  
 Fresh flowers blow as flowers have blown,  
 And the heart is loth to deaden  
 Hopes that she so long hath known.

Be thou wiser, youthful Maiden !  
 And, when thy decline shall come,  
 Let not flowers, or boughs fruit-laden,  
 Hide the knowledge of thy doom.

Now, even now, ere wrapped in slumber,  
 Fix thine eyes upon the sea,  
 That absorbs time, space, and number,  
 Look towards Eternity!

Follow thou the flowing River  
 On whose breast are thither borne  
 All Deceiv'd, and each Deceiver,  
 Through the gates of night and morn;

Through the years' successive portals;  
 Through the bounds which many a star  
 Marks, not mindless of frail mortals  
 When his light returns from far.

Thus, when Thou with Time hast travell'd  
 Tow'rds the mighty gulph of things,  
 And the mazy Stream unravell'd  
 With thy best imaginings;



Think, if thou on beauty leanest,  
Think how pitiful that stay,  
Did not virtue give the meanest  
Charms superior to decay.

Duty, like a strict preceptor,  
Sometimes frowns, or seems to frown ;  
Choose her thistle for thy sceptre,  
While thy brow youth's roses crown.

Grasp it, — if thou shrink and tremble,  
Fairest Damsel of the green !  
Thou wilt lack the only symbol  
That proclaims a genuine Queen ;

And ensures those palms of honour  
Which selected spirits wear,  
Bending low before the Donor,  
Lord of Heaven's unchanging Year !

# LAMENT OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

ON THE EVE OF A NEW YEAR.

---

“ SMILE of the Moon ! — for so I name  
That silent greeting from above ;  
A gentle flash of light that came  
From Her whom drooping Captives love ;  
Or art thou of still higher birth ?  
Thou that didst part the clouds of earth,  
My torpor to reprove !

“ Bright boon of pitying Heaven — alas,  
I may not trust thy placid cheer !  
Pondering that Time to-night will pass  
The threshold of another year ;  
For years to me are sad and dull ;  
My very moments are too full  
Of hopelessness and fear.

“ — And yet, the soul-awakening gleam,  
 That struck perchance the farthest cone  
 Of Scotland's rocky wilds, did seem  
 To visit me, and me alone ;  
 Me, unapproach'd by any friend,  
 Save those who to my sorrows lend  
 Tears due unto their own.

“ To-night, the church-tower bells shall ring,  
 Through these wide realms, a festive peal ;  
 To the new year a welcoming ;  
 A tuneful offering for the weal  
 Of happy millions lulled in sleep ;  
 While I am forced to watch and weep,  
 By wounds that may not heal.

“ Born all too high, by wedlock raised  
 Still higher — to be cast thus low !  
 Would that mine eyes had never gaz'd  
 On aught of more ambitious show  
 Than the sweet flow'rets of the fields !  
 — It is my royal state that yields  
 This bitterness of woe.

“ Yet how ? — for I, if there be truth  
 In the world’s voice, was passing fair ;  
 And beauty, for confiding youth,  
 Those shocks of passion can prepare  
 That kill the bloom before its time,  
 And blanch, without the Owner’s crime,  
 The most resplendent hair.

“ Unblest distinctions ! showered on me  
 To bind a lingering life in chains ;  
 All that could quit my grasp, or flee,  
 Is gone ; — but not the subtle stains  
 Fixed in the spirit ; — for even here  
 Can I be proud that jealous fear  
 Of what I was remains.

“ A woman rules my prison’s key ;  
 A sister Queen, against the bent  
 Of law and holiest sympathy,  
 Detains me — doubtful of the event ;  
 Great God, who feel’st for my distress,  
 My thoughts are all that I possess,  
 O keep them innocent !

" Farewell for ever human aid,  
 Which abject mortals vainly court !  
 By friends deceived, by foes betrayed,  
 Of fears the prey, of hopes the sport,  
 Nought but the world-redeeming Cross  
 Is able to supply my loss,  
 My burthen to support.

" Hark ! the death-note of the year,  
 Sounded by the castle-clock !"—  
 From her sunk eyes a stagnant tear  
 Stole forth, unsettled by the shock ;  
 But oft the woods renewed their green,  
 Ere the tir'd head of Scotland's Queen  
 Repos'd upon the block !

TO \_\_\_\_\_,  
ON HER FIRST ASCENT TO THE SUMMIT OF HELVELLYN.

**I**NMATE of a mountain Dwelling,  
Thou hast clomb aloft, and gaz'd,  
From the watch-towers of Helvellyn;  
Awed, delighted, and amazed!

Potent was the spell that bound thee  
In the moment of dismay,  
While blue Ether's arms, flung round thee,  
Still'd the pantings of dismay.

Lo ! the dwindled woods and meadows !  
What a vast abyss is there !  
Lo ! the clouds, the solemn shadows,  
And the glistenings — heavenly fair !

And a record of commotion  
Which a thousand ridges yield;  
Ridge, and gulph, and distant ocean  
Gleaming like a silver shield !

— Take thy flight; — possess, inherit  
Alps or Andes — they are thine !  
With the morning's roseate spirit,  
Sweep their length of snowy line ;

Or survey the bright dominions  
In the gorgeous colours drest,  
Flung from off the purple pinions,  
Evening spreads throughout the west !

Thine are all the choral fountains  
Warbling in each sparry vault  
Of the untrodden lunar mountains ;  
Listen to their songs ! — or halt,

To Niphate's top invited,  
Whither spiteful Satan steer'd;  
Or descend where the ark alighted  
When the green earth re-appeared;

For the power of hills is on thee,  
As was witnessed through thine eye  
Then, when old Helvellyn won thee  
To confess their majesty !



ODE  
TO LYCORIS,  
MAY, 1817.

---

AN age hath been when Earth was proud  
Of lustre too intense  
To be sustain'd; and Mortals bowed  
The front in self-defence.  
Who *then*, if Dian's crescent gleamed,  
Or Cupid's sparkling arrow streamed  
While on the wing the Urchin play'd,  
Could fearlessly approach the shade?  
— Enough for one soft vernal day,  
If I, a Bard of ebbing time  
And nurtur'd in a fickle clime,  
May haunt this horned bay;  
Whose amorous water multiplies  
The flitting halcyon's vivid dyes;  
And smoothes its liquid breast — to show  
These swan-like specks of mountain snow,

White, as the pair that slid along the plains  
Of Heaven, when Venus held the reins !

## II.

In youth we love the darksome lawn  
Brush'd by the owlet's wing ;  
Then, Twilight is preferred to Dawn,  
And Autumn to the Spring.  
Sad fancies do we then affect,  
In luxury of disrespect  
To our own prodigal excess  
Of too familiar happiness.  
Lycoris (if such name befit  
Thee, thee my life's celestial sign !)  
When Nature marks the year's decline  
Be ours to welcome it ;  
Pleased with the soil's requited cares ;  
Pleased with the blue that ether wears ;  
Pleased while the sylvan world displays  
Its ripeness to the feeding gaze ;  
Pleased when the sullen winds resound the knell  
Of the resplendent miracle.

## III.

But something whispers to my heart  
That, as we downward tend,  
Lycoris ! life requires an *art*  
To which our souls must bend ;  
A skill — to balance and supply ;  
And, ere the flowing fount be dry,  
As soon it must, a sense to sip,  
Or drink, with no fastidious lip.  
Frank greeting, then, to that blithe Guest  
Diffusing smiles o'er land and sea,  
To aid the vernal Deity  
Whose home is in the breast !  
May pensive Autumn ne'er present  
A claim to her disparagement !  
While blossoms and the budding spray  
Inspire us in our own decay ;  
Still, as we nearer draw to life's dark goal,  
Be hopeful Spring the favourite of the Soul !

## TO THE SAME.

---

ENOUGH of climbing toil ! — Ambition treads  
Here, as in busier scenes, ground steep and rough,  
Oft perilous, always tiresome ; and each step,  
As we for most uncertain gain ascend  
Toward the clouds, dwarfing the world below,  
Induces, for its old familiar sights,  
Unacceptable feelings of contempt,  
With wonder mixed — that Man could e'er be tied,  
In anxious bondage, to such nice array  
And formal fellowship of petty things !  
Oh, 'tis the *heart* that magnifies this life,  
Making a truth and beauty of her own !  
And moss-grown alleys, circumscribing shades,  
And gurgling rills, assist her in the work  
More efficaciously than realms outspread,  
As in a map, before the adventurer's gaze,

Ocean and earth contending for regard !  
Lo ! there a dim Egerian grotto fringed  
With ivy-twine, profusely from its brows  
Dependant, — enter without further aim ;  
And let me see thee sink into a mood  
Of quiet thought — protracted till thine eye  
Be calm as water when the winds are gone  
And no one can tell whither. Dearest Friend !  
We two have known such happy hours together  
That, were power granted to replace them (fetched  
From out the pensive shadows where they lie)  
In the first warmth of their original sunshine,  
Loth should I be to use it ; passing sweet  
Are the domains of tender memory !

SUGGESTED BY A BEAUTIFUL RUIN UPON ONE OF THE  
ISLANDS OF LOCH LOMOND, A PLACE CHOSEN FOR  
THE RETREAT OF A SOLITARY INDIVIDUAL, FROM  
WHOM THIS HABITATION ACQUIRED THE NAME OF

### THE BROWNIE'S CELL.

---

To barren heath, and quaking fen,  
Or depth of labyrinthine glen;  
Or into trackless forest set  
With trees, whose lofty umbrage met;  
World-wearied Men withdrew of yore, —  
(Penance their trust, and Prayer their store;)  
And in the wilderness were bound  
To such apartments as they found;  
Or with a new ambition raised;  
That God might suitably be praised.

High lodged the Warrior, like a bird of prey;  
Or where broad waters round him lay:  
But this wild Ruin is no ghost  
Of his devices — buried, lost!  
Within this little lonely Isle  
There stood a consecrated Pile;  
Where tapers burn'd, and mass was sung,  
For them whose timid spirits clung  
To mortal succour, though the tomb  
Had fixed, for ever fixed, their doom!

Upon those servants of another world  
When madding Power her bolts had hurled,  
Their habitation shook; — it fell,  
And perish'd — save one narrow Cell;  
Whither, at length, a Wretch retir'd  
Who neither grovell'd nor aspir'd:  
He, struggling in the net of pride,  
The future scorned, the past defied;  
Still tempering, from the unguilty forge  
Of vain conceit, an iron scourge!

Proud Remnant was he of a fearless Race,  
Who stood and flourished face to face  
With their perennial hills; — but Crime  
Hastening the stern decrees of Time,  
Brought low a Power, which from its home  
Burst, when repose grew wearisome;  
And, taking impulse from the sword,  
And mocking its own plighted word,  
Had found, in ravage widely dealt,  
Its warfare's bourn, its travel's belt!

All, all were dispossess'd, save Him whose smile  
Shot lightning through this lonely Isle!  
No right had he but what he made  
To this small spot, his leafy shade;  
But the ground lay within that ring  
To which he only dared to cling;  
Renouncing here, as worse than dead,  
The craven few who bowed the head  
Beneath the change, who heard a claim  
How loud! yet liv'd in peace with shame.



From year to year this shaggy Mortal went  
(So seem'd it) down a strange descent :  
Till they, who saw his outward frame,  
Fix'd on him an unhallow'd name ;  
Him — free from all malicious taint,  
And guiding, like the Patmos Saint,  
A pen unwearied — to indite,  
In his lone Isle, the dreams of night ;  
Impassion'd dreams, that strove to span  
The faded glories of his Clan !

Suns that through blood their western harbour sought,  
And stars that in their courses fought, —  
Towers rent, winds combating with woods —  
Lands delug'd by unbridled floods, —  
And beast and bird that from the spell  
Of sleep took import terrible, —  
These types mysterious (if the show  
Of battle and the routed foe  
Had failed) would furnish an array  
Of matter for the dawning day !

How disappeared He? — ask the Newt and Toad,  
Inheritors of his abode;  
The Otter crouching undisturb'd,  
In her dank cleft; — but be thou curb'd  
O froward Fancy! mid a scene  
Of aspect winning and serene;  
For those offensive creatures shun  
The inquisition of the sun!  
And in this region flowers delight,  
And all is lovely to the sight.

Spring finds not here a melancholy breast,  
When she applies her annual test  
To dead and living; when her breath  
Quickens, as now, the wither'd heath; —  
Nor flaunting Summer — when he throws  
His soul into the briar-rose;  
Or calls the lily from her sleep  
Prolong'd beneath the bordering deep;  
Nor Autumn, when the viewless wren  
Is warbling near the BROWNIE'S Den.

Wild Relique ! beauteous as the chosen spot  
In Nysa's isle, the embellish'd Grot ;  
Whither, by care of Lybian Jove,  
(High Servant of paternal Love)  
Young Bacchus was conveyed — to lie  
Safe from his step-dame Rhea's eye ;  
Where bud, and bloom, and fruitage, glowed,  
Close-crowding round the Infant God ;  
All colours, and the liveliest streak  
A foil to his celestial cheek !

COMPOSED AT CORA LINN,

IN SIGHT OF WALLACE'S TOWER.

---

" — How Wallace fought for Scotland, left the name  
Of Wallace to be found, like a wild flower,  
All over his dear Country ; left the deeds  
Of Wallace, like a family of ghosts,  
To people the steep rocks and river banks  
Her natural sanctuaries, with a local soul  
Of independence and stern liberty." *MS.*

---

LORD of the Vale ! astounding Flood !  
The dullest leaf, in this thick wood,  
Quakes — conscious of thy power ;  
The caves reply with hollow moan ;  
And vibrates, to its central stone,  
Yon time-cemented Tower !

And yet how fair the rural scene !  
For thou, O Clyde, hast ever been  
Beneficent as strong ;  
Pleased in refreshing dews to steep  
The little trembling flowers that peep  
Thy shelving rocks among.

Hence all who love their country, love  
To look on thee — delight to rove  
Where they thy voice can hear ;  
And, to the patriot-warrior's Shade,  
Lord of the vale ! to Heroes laid  
In dust, that voice is dear !

Along thy banks, at dead of night,  
Sweeps visibly the Wallace Wight ;  
Or stands, in warlike vest,  
Aloft, beneath the moon's pale beam,  
A Champion worthy of the Stream,  
Yon grey tower's living crest !

But clouds and envious darkness hide  
A Form not doubtfully descried : —  
Their transient mission o'er,  
O say to what blind regions flee  
These Shapes of awful phantasy ?  
To what untrodden shore ?

Less than divine command they spurn ;  
But this we from the mountains learn,  
And this the valleys show,  
That never will they deign to hold  
Communion where the heart is cold  
To human weal and woe.

The man of abject soul in vain  
Shall walk the Marathonian Plain ;  
Or thrid the shadowy gloom,  
That still invests the guardian Pass,  
Where stood sublime Leonidas,  
Devoted to the tomb.

Nor deem that it can aught avail  
For such to glide with oar or sail  
Beneath the piny wood,  
Where Tell once drew, by Uri's lake,  
His vengeful shafts — prepared to slake  
Their thirst in Tyrants' blood !

TO THE REV. DR. W—.

(WITH THE SONNETS TO THE RIVER DUDDON, AND OTHER  
POEMS IN THIS COLLECTION.)

---

THE Minstrels played their Christmas tune  
To-night beneath my cottage eaves ;  
While, smitten by a lofty moon,  
The' encircling Laurels, thick with leaves,  
Gave back a rich and dazzling sheen,  
That overpowered their natural green.

Through hill and valley every breeze  
Had sunk to rest with folded wings ;  
Keen was the air, but could not freeze  
Nor check the music of the strings ;  
So stout and hardy were the band  
That scrap'd the chords with strenuous hand.

And who but listen'd? — till was paid  
Respect to every Inmate's claim ;  
The greeting given, the music played  
In honour of each household name,  
Duly pronounc'd with lusty call,  
And “ merry Christmas ” wish'd to all !

O Brother ! I revere the choice  
That took thee from thy native hills ;  
And it is given thee to rejoice :  
Though public care full often tills  
(Heaven only witness of the toil)  
A barren and ungrateful soil.

Yet, would that Thou, with me and mine,  
Hádst heard this never-failing rite ;  
And seen on other faces shine  
A true revival of the light ;  
Which Nature, and these rustic Powers,  
In simple childhood, spread through ours !



For pleasure hath not ceased to wait  
On these expected annual rounds,  
Whether the rich man's sumptuous gate  
Call forth the unelaborate sounds,  
Or they are offered at the door  
That guards the lowliest of the poor.

How touching, when, at midnight, sweep  
Snow-muffled winds, and all is dark,  
To hear — and sink again to sleep !  
Or, at an earlier call, to mark,  
By blazing fire, the still suspense  
Of self-complacent innocence ;

The mutual nod, — the grave disguise  
Of hearts with gladness brimming o'er ;  
And some unbidden tears that rise  
For names once heard, and heard no more ;  
Tears brighten'd by the serenade  
For infant in the cradle laid !

Ah ! not for emerald fields alone,  
With ambient streams more pure and bright  
Than fabled Cytherea's zone  
Glittering before the Thunderer's sight,  
Is to my heart of hearts endeared,  
The ground where we were born and rear'd !

Hail, ancient Manners ! sure defence,  
Where they survive, of wholesome laws ;  
Remnants of love whose modest sense  
Thus into narrow room withdraws ;  
Hail, Usages of pristine mould,  
And ye, that guard them, Mountains old !

Bear with me, Brother ! quench the thought  
That slights this passion, or condemns ;  
If thee fond Fancy ever brought  
From the proud margin of the Thames,  
And Lambeth's venerable towers,  
To humbler streams, and greener bowers.

Yes, they can make, who fail to find,  
Short leisure even in busiest days ;  
Moments — to cast a look behind,  
And profit by those kindly rays  
That through the clouds do sometimes steal,  
And all the far-off past reveal.

Hence, while the imperial City's din  
Beats frequent on thy satiate ear,  
A pleas'd attention I may win  
To agitations less severe,  
That neither overwhelm nor cloy,  
But fill the hollow vale with joy !

## REPENTANCE.

### A BALLAD.

---

THE fields which with covetous spirit we sold,  
Those beautiful fields, the delight of our day,  
Would have brought us more good than a burthen of  
gold,  
Could we but have been as contented as they.

When the troublesome Tempter beset us, said I,  
“ Let him come, with his purse proudly grasp’d in his  
hand;  
But, Allan, be true to me, Allan, — we’ll die  
Before he shall go with an inch of the land !”

There dwelt we, as happy as birds in their bowers;  
Unfetter’d as bees that in gardens abide;  
We could do what we chose with the land, it was ours;  
And for us the brook murmur’d that ran by its side.

But now we are strangers, go early or late;  
And often, like one overburthen'd with sin,  
With my hand on the latch of the half-open'd gate,  
I look at the fields — and I cannot go in !

When I walk by the hedge on a bright summer's day,  
Or sit in the shade of my grandfather's tree,  
A stern face it puts on, as if ready to say,  
“ What ails you, that you must come creeping to me ! ”

With our pastures about us, we could not be sad;  
Our comfort was near if we ever were cross'd;  
But the blessings, and comfort, and wealth that we had,  
We slighted them all, — and our birth-right was lost.

Oh, ill-judging sire of an innocent son,  
Who must now be a wanderer ! — but peace to that  
strain !

Think of evening's repose when our labour was done,  
The Sabbath's return — and its leisure's soft chain !

And in sickness, if night had been sparing of sleep,  
How cheerful, at sunrise, the hill where I stood,  
Looking down on the kine, and our treasure of sheep  
That besprinkled the field — 'twas like youth in my  
blood !

Now I cleave to the house, and am dull as a snail ;  
And, oftentimes, hear the church-bell with a sigh,  
That follows the thought — We've no land in the vale,  
Save six feet of earth where our forefathers lie !

## SONG FOR THE SPINNING WHEEL.

FOUNDED UPON A BELIEF PREVALENT AMONG THE PASTORAL VALES OF WESTMORLAND.

---

SWIFTLY turn the murmuring wheel !  
Night has brought the welcome hour,  
When the weary fingers feel  
Help, as if from fairy power ;  
Dewy night o'ershades the ground ;  
Turn the swift wheel round and round !

Now, beneath the starry sky,  
Rest the widely-scatter'd sheep ; —  
Ply, the pleasant labour, ply ! —  
For the spindle, while they sleep,  
With a motion smooth and fine  
Gathers up a trustier line.

Short-liv'd likings may be bred

By a glance from fickle eyes ;

But true love is like the thread

Which the kindly wool supplies,

When the flocks are all at rest,

Sleeping on the mountain's breast.



## HINT FROM THE MOUNTAINS

FOR CERTAIN POLITICAL ASPIRANTS.

---

STRANGER, 'tis a sight of pleasure

When the wings of genius rise,

Their ability to measure

With great enterprise;

But in man was ne'er such daring

As yon Hawk exhibits, pairing

His brave spirit with the war in

The stormy skies!

Mark him, how his power he uses,

Lays it by, at will resumes!

Mark, ere for his haunt he chooses

Clouds and utter glooms!

There, he wheels in downward mazes;

Sunward now his flight he raises,

Catches fire, as seems, and blazes

With uninjur'd plumes! —

## ANSWER.

Traveller, 'tis no act of courage  
Which aloft thou dost discern ;  
No bold bird gone forth to forage  
Mid the tempest stern ;  
But such mockery as the Nations  
See, when Commonwealth-vexations  
Lift men from their native stations,  
Like yon tuft of fern ;

Such it is, and not a Haggard  
Soaring on undaunted wing ;  
'Tis by nature dull and laggard,  
A poor helpless Thing,  
Dry, and withered, light and yellow ; —  
*That* to be the tempest's fellow !  
Wait — and you shall see how hollow  
Its endeavouring !

## DION.

(SEE PLUTARCH )

---

### 1

FAIR is the Swan, whose majesty, prevailing  
O'er breezeless water, on Locarno's lake,  
Bears him on while proudly sailing  
He leaves behind a moon-illumined wake:  
Behold ! the mantling spirit of reserve  
Fashions his neck into a goodly curve ;  
An arch thrown back between luxuriant wings  
Of whitest garniture, like fir-tree boughs .  
To which, on some unruff'd morning, clings  
A flaky weight of winter's purest snows !  
— Behold ! — as with a gushing impulse heaves  
That downy prow, and softly cleaves  
The mirror of the crystal flood,  
Vanish inverted hill, and shadowy wood,  
And pendant rocks, where'er, in gliding state,  
Winds the mute Creature without visible Mate

Or rival, save the Queen of night  
Showering down a silver light,  
From heaven, upon her chosen favourite !

## 2

So pure, so bright, so fitted to embrace,  
Where'er he turn'd, a natural grace  
Of haughtiness without pretence,  
And to unfold a still magnificence,  
Was princely Dion, in the power  
And beauty of his happier hour.  
Nor less the homage that was seen to wait  
On Dion's virtues, when the lunar beam  
Of Plato's genius, from its lofty sphere,  
Fell round him in the grove of Academe,  
Softening their inbred dignity austere ; —  
That he, not too elate  
With self-sufficing solitude,  
But with majestic lowliness endued,  
Might in the universal bosom reign,

And from affectionate observance gain,  
Help, under every change of adverse fate.

## 3

Five thousand warriors — O the rapturous day !  
Each crown'd with flowers, and arm'd with spear and  
shield,  
Or ruder weapon which their course might yield,  
To Syracuse advance in bright array.  
Who leads them on ? — The anxious People see  
Long-exil'd Dion marching at their head,  
He also crown'd with flowers of Sicily,  
And in a white, far-beaming, corslet clad !  
Pure transport undisturbed by doubt or fear  
The Gazers feel ; and, rushing to the plain,  
Salute those Strangers as a holy train  
Or blest procession (to the Immortals dear)  
That brought their precious liberty again.  
Lo ! when the gates are enter'd, on each hand,  
Down the long street, rich goblets fill'd with wine  
In seemly order stand,

On tables set, as if for rites divine ; —  
And, wheresoe'er the great Deliverer pass'd,  
Fruits were strewn before his eye,  
And flowers upon his person cast  
In boundless prodigality ;  
Nor did the general voice abstain from prayer,  
Invoking Dion's tutelary care,  
As if a very Deity he were !

## 4

Mourn, hills and groves of Attica ! and mourn  
Illyssus, bending o'er thy classic urn !  
Mourn, and lament for him whose spirit dreads  
Your once-sweet memory, studious walks and shades !  
For him who to divinity aspir'd,  
Not on the breath of popular applause,  
But through dependance on the sacred laws  
Framed in the schools where Wisdom dwelt retir'd,  
Intent to trace the ideal path of right  
(More fair than heaven's broad causeway pav'd with stars)

Which Dion learn'd to measure with delight ;  
But he hath overleap'd the eternal bars ;  
And, following guides whose craft holds no consent  
With aught that breathes the ethereal element,  
Hath stained the robes of civil power with blood,  
Unjustly shed, though for the public good.  
Whence doubts that came too late, and wishes vain,  
Hollow excuses — and triumphant pain ;  
And oft his cogitations sink as low  
As, through the abysses of a joyless heart,  
The heaviest plummet of despair can go —  
But whence that sudden check ? — that fearful start !

He hears an uncouth sound —

Anon his lifted eyes

Saw at a long-drawn gallery's dusky bound,

A Shape, of more than mortal size

And hideous aspect, stalking round and round !

A woman's garb the Phantom wore,

And fiercely swept the marble floor, —

Like Auster whirling to and fro,

His force on Caspian foam to try ;

Or Boreas when he scours the snow  
That skins the plains of Thessaly,  
Or when aloft on Mænalus he stops  
His flight, mid eddying pine-tree tops !

## V.

So, but from toil less sign of profit reaping,  
The sullen Spectre to her purpose bowed,  
Sweeping — vehemently sweeping —  
No pause admitted — no design avowed !  
“ Avaunt, inexplicable Guest ! — avaunt  
Intrusive Presence ! — Let me rather see  
The coronal that coiling vipers make ;  
The torch that flames with many a lurid flake,  
And the long train of doleful pageantry  
Which they behold, whom vengeful Furies haunt,  
Who, while they struggle from the scourge to flee,  
Move where the blasted soil is not unworn,  
And, in their anguish, bear what other minds have borne !



## VI.

But Shapes that come not at an earthly call,  
Will not depart when mortal voices bid ;  
Lords of the visionary Eye whose lid,  
Once raised, remains aghast and will not fall !  
Ye Gods, thought He, that servile Implement  
Obeys a mystical intent !  
Your Minister would brush away  
The spots that to my soul adhere ;  
But should she labour night and day,  
They will not, cannot disappear. —  
Whence angry perturbations, — and that look  
Which no Philosophy can brook !

## VII.

Ill-fated Chief ! there are whose hopes are built  
Upon the ruins of thy glorious name ;  
Who, through the portal of one moment's guilt,  
Pursue thee with their deadly aim !

O matchless perfidy ! portentous lust  
Of monstrous crime ! — that horror-striking blade,  
Drawn in defiance of the Gods, hath laid  
The noble Syracusan low in dust !  
Shudder the walls — the marble city wept —  
And sylvan places heaved a pensive sigh ;  
But in calm peace the appointed Victim slept,  
As he had fallen in magnanimity :  
Of spirit too capacious to require  
That Destiny her course should change ; too just  
To his own native greatness to desire  
That wretched boon, days lengthened by mistrust.  
So were the hopeless troubles, that involved  
The soul of Dion, instantly dissolv'd.  
Releas'd from life and cares of princely state,  
He left this moral grafted on his Fate,  
“ Him only pleasure leads, and peace attends ;  
Him, only him, the shield of Jove defends,  
Whose means are fair and spotless as his ends.”

## THE PILGRIM'S DREAM,

OR, THE STAR AND THE GLOW-WORM.

---

A PILGRIM, when the summer day  
Had closed upon his weary way,  
A lodging begg'd beneath a castle's roof ;  
But him the haughty Warder spurn'd ;  
And from the gate the Pilgrim turn'd,  
To seek such covert as the field  
Or heath-besprinkled copse might yield,  
Or lofty wood, shower-proof.

He paced along ; and, pensively  
Halting beneath a shady tree,  
Whose moss-grown root might serve for couch or seat,

Fixed on a Star his upward eye ;  
Then, from the tenant of the sky  
He turned, and watch'd with kindred look,  
A glow-worm, in a dusky nook,  
Apparent at his feet.

The murmur of a neighbouring stream  
Induced a soft and slumb'rous dream,  
A pregnant dream within whose shadowy bounds  
He recognised the earth-born Star,  
And *That* whose radiance gleam'd from far ;  
And (strange to witness !) from the frame  
Of the ethereal Orb there came  
Intelligible sounds.

Much did it taunt the humbler Light  
That now, when day was fled, and night  
Hushed the dark earth — fast closing weary eyes,  
A very Reptile could presume  
To show her taper in the gloom,

As if in rivalry with One  
Who sate a Ruler on his throne  
Erected in the skies.

“ Exalted Star !” the Worm replied,  
“ Abate this unbecoming pride,  
Or with a less uneasy lustre shine ;  
Thou shrink’st as momentarily thy rays  
Are master’d by the breathing haze ;  
While neither mist, nor thickest cloud  
That shapes in heaven its murky shroud,  
Hath power to injure mine.

Yet not for this do I aspire  
To match the spark of local fire,  
That at my will burns on the dewy lawn,  
With thy acknowledged glories ; — No !  
But it behoves that thou shouldst know  
What favours do attend me here,  
Till, like thyself, I disappear  
Before the purple dawn.”

When this in modest guise was said,  
Across the welkin seem'd to spread  
A boding sound — for aught but sleep unfit !  
Hills quaked — the rivers backward ran —  
That Star, so proud of late, looked wan;  
And reeled with visionary stir  
In the blue depth, like Lucifer  
Cast headlong to the pit !

Fire raged, — and when the spangled floor  
Of ancient ether was no more,  
New heavens succeeded, by the dream brought forth :  
And all the happy souls that rode  
Transfigured through that fresh abode,  
Had heretofore, in humble trust,  
Shone meekly mid their native dust,  
The Glow-worms of the earth !

This knowledge, from an Angel's voice  
Proceeding, made the heart rejoice  
Of Him who slept upon the open lea :

Waking at morn he murmur'd not;  
And, till life's journey closed, the spot  
Was to the Pilgrim's soul endeared,  
Where by that dream he had been cheered.  
Beneath the shady tree.

## ARTEGAL AND ELIDURE.

(SEE THE CHRONICLE OF GEOFFRY OF MONMOUTH, AND  
MILTON'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND.)

---

WHERE be the Temples which, in Britain's Isle,  
For his paternal Gods, the Trojan raised ?  
Gone like a morning dream, or like a pile  
Of clouds — that in cerulean ether blazed !  
Ere Julius landed on her white-cliff'd shore,  
    They sank, delivered o'er  
To fatal dissolution ; and, I ween,  
No vestige then was left that such had ever been.



Nathless, a British record (long concealed  
In old Armorica, whose secret springs  
No Gothic conqueror ever drank) revealed  
The wond'rous current of forgotten things;  
How Brutus came, by oracles impell'd,  
    And Albion's giants quell'd, —  
A brood whom no civility could melt,  
“ Who never tasted grace, and goodness ne'er had felt.”

By brave Corineus aided, he subdued  
And rooted out the intolerable kind;  
And this too-long-polluted land imbued  
With goodly arts and usages refined;  
Whence golden harvests, cities, warlike towers,  
    And Pleasure's sumptuous bowers;  
Whence all the fix'd delights of house and home,  
Friendships that will not break, and love that cannot roam.

O, happy Britain ! region all too fair  
For self-delighting fancy to endure  
That silence only should inhabit there,  
Wild beasts, or uncouth savages impure !  
But, intermingled with the generous seed,  
Grew many a poisonous weed ;  
Thus fares it still with all that takes its birth  
From human care, or grows upon the breast of earth.

Hence, and how soon ! that war of vengeance wag'd  
By Guendolen against her faithless lord ;  
Till she, in jealous fury unassuag'd,  
Had slain his Paramour with ruthless sword :  
Then, into Severn hideously defiled,  
She flung her blameless child,  
Sabrina, — vowing that the stream should bear  
That name through every age, her hatred to declare.

So speaks the Chronicle, and tells of Lear  
By his ungrateful daughters turn'd adrift.  
Ye lightnings, hear his voice ! — they cannot hear  
Nor can the winds restore his simple gift.  
But one there is, a child of nature meek,  
    Who comes her sire to seek ;  
And he, recovering sense, upon her breast  
Leans smilingly, and sinks into a perfect rest.

There too we read of Spenser's fairy themes,  
And those that Milton lov'd in youthful years ;  
The sage enchanter Merlin's subtle schemes ;  
The feats of Arthur and his knightly peers ;  
Of Arthur, — who, to upper light restored  
    With that terrific sword  
Which yet he wields in subterranean war,  
Shall lift his country's fame above the polar star !

What wonder, then, if in such ample field  
Of old tradition, one particular flower  
Doth seemingly in vain its fragrance yield,  
And bloom unnoticed even to this late hour.

Now, gentle Muses, your assistance grant,

While I this flower transplant  
Into a garden stor'd with Poesy ;  
Where flowers and herbs unite, and haply some weeds be,  
That, wanting not wild grace, are from all mischief free !

A KING more worthy of respect and love  
Than wise Gorbonian, ruled not in his day;  
And grateful Britain prospered far above  
All neighbouring countries through his righteous sway;  
He poured rewards and honours on the good;  
The Oppressor he withstood;  
And, while he served the gods with reverence due,  
Fields smiled, and temples rose, and towns and cities grew.

He died, whom Artegal succeeds — his son;  
But how unworthy of such sire was he!  
A hopeful reign, auspiciously begun,  
Was darkened soon by foul iniquity.  
From crime to crime he mounted, till at length  
The nobles leagued their strength  
With a vexed people, and the tyrant chased;  
And, on the vacant throne, his worthier brother placed.

From realm to realm the humbled Exile went,  
Suppliant for aid his kingdom to regain ;  
In many a court, and many a warrior's tent,  
He urged his persevering suit in vain.  
Him, in whose wretched heart ambition failed,  
Dire poverty assailed ;  
And, tired with slights which he no more could brook,  
Towards his native soil he cast a longing look.

Fair blew the wish'd-for wind — the voyage sped ;  
He landed ; and, by many dangers scared,  
“ Poorly provided, poorly followed,”  
To Calaterium's forest he repaired.  
How changed from him who, born to highest place,  
Had swayed the royal mace,  
Flattered and feared, despised yet deified,  
In Troynovant, his seat by silver Thames's side !

From that wild region where the crownless king  
Lay in concealment with his scanty train,  
Supporting life by water from the spring,  
And such chance food as outlaws can obtain,  
Unto the few whom he esteems his friends  
A messenger he sends ;  
And from their secret loyalty requires  
Shelter and daily bread,— the amount of his desires.

While he the issue waits, at early morn  
Wandering by stealth abroad, he chanced to hear  
A startling outcry made by hound and horn,  
From which the tusky boar hath fled in fear ;  
And, scouring tow'rds him o'er the grassy plain,  
Behold the hunter train !  
He bids his little company advance  
With seeming unconcern and steady countenance.

The royal Elidure, who leads the chace,  
Hath checked his foaming courser — Can it be !  
Methinks that I should recognise that face,  
Though much disguised by long adversity !  
He gazed, rejoicing, and again he gazed,

Confounded and amazed —

“ It is the king, my brother !” and, by sound  
Of his own voice confirmed, he leaps upon the ground.

Long, strict, and tender, was the embrace he gave,  
Feebly returned by daunted Artegál ;  
Whose natural affection doubts enslave,  
And apprehensions dark and criminal.  
Loth to restrain the moving interview,

The attendant lords withdrew ;

And, while they stood upon the plain apart,  
Thus Elidure, by words, relieved his struggling heart.



“ By heavenly Powers conducted, we have met;  
— O Brother ! to my knowledge lost so long,  
But neither lost to love, nor to regret,  
Nor to my wishes lost, forgive the wrong,  
(Such it may seem) if I thy crown have borne,  
Thy royal mantle worn :  
I was their natural guardian ; and 'tis just  
That now I should restore what hath been held in trust.”

Awhile the astonish'd Artegal stood mute,  
Then thus exclaimed — “ To me of titles shorn  
And stripp'd of power ! me, feeble, destitute,  
To me a kingdom ! — spare the bitter scorn !  
If justice ruled the breast of foreign kings  
Then, on the wide-spread wings  
Of war, had I returned to claim my right ;  
This will I here avow, not dreading thy despite.”

“ I do not blame thee,” Elidure replied,  
“ But, if my looks did with my words agree,  
I should at once be trusted, not defied,  
And thou from all disquietude be free.  
May spotless Dian, Goddess of the chace,  
Who to this blessed place  
At this blest moment led me, if I speak  
With insincere intent, on me her vengeance wreak !

Were this same spear, which in my hand I grasp,  
The British sceptre, here would I to thee  
The symbol yield; and would undo this clasp,  
If it confined the robe of sovereignty.  
Odious to me the pomp of regal court,  
And joyless sylvan sport,  
While thou art roving wretched and forlorn,  
Thy couch the dewy earth, thy roof the forest thorn !”

Then Artegal thus spake — “ I only sought,  
Within this realm a place of safe retreat;  
Beware of rousing an ambitious thought;  
Beware of kindling hopes, for me unmeet !  
Thou art reputed wise, but in my mind  
    Art pitiably blind ;  
Full soon this generous purpose thou may'st rue,  
When that which has been done no wishes can undo.

Who, when a crown is fixed upon his head,  
Would balance claim with claim, and right with right ?  
But thou — I know not how inspired, how led —  
Wouldst change the course of things in all men's sight !  
And this for one who cannot imitate  
    Thy virtue, who may hate :  
For, if by such strange sacrifice restored,  
He reign, thou still must be his king, and sovereign lord.

Lifted in magnanimity above  
Aught that my feeble nature could perform,  
Or even conceive; surpassing me in love  
Far as in power the eagle doth the worm;  
I, Brother! only should be king in name,  
    And govern to my shame;  
A shadow in a hated land while all  
Of glad or willing service to thy share would fall."

"Believe it not," said Elidure; "respect  
Awaits on virtuous life, and ever most  
Attends on goodness with dominion decked,  
Which stands the universal empire's boast;  
This can thy own experience testify:  
    Nor shall thy foes deny  
That, in the gracious opening of thy reign,  
Our Father's spirit seemed in thee to breathe again.

And what if o'er that bright unbosoming  
Clouds of disgrace and envious fortune past !  
Have we not seen the glories of the spring  
By veil of noontide darkness overcast ?  
The frith that glitter'd like a warrior's shield,  
    The sky, the gay green field,  
Are vanished ; — gladness ceases in the groves,  
And trepidation strikes the blackened mountain coves.

But is that gloom dissolved ? how passing clear  
Seems the wide world — far brighter than before !  
Even so thy latent worth will re-appear,  
Gladdening the people's heart from shore to shore,  
For youthful faults ripe virtues shall atone ;  
    Re-seated on thy throne,  
Proof shalt thou furnish that misfortune, pain,  
And sorrow, have confirmed thy native right to reign.

But, not to overlook what thou may'st know,  
Thy enemies are neither weak nor few,  
And circumspect must be our course and slow;  
Or from my purpose ruin may ensue.  
Dismiss thy followers; — let them calmly wait  
Such change in thy estate  
As I already have in thought devised;  
And which, with caution due, may soon be realised."

The Story tells what courses were pursued,  
Until King Elidure, with full consent  
Of all his Peers, before the multitude,  
Rose, — and, to consummate this just intent,  
Did place upon his Brother's head the Crown  
Relinquished by his own;  
Then to his people cried, "Receive your Lord  
Gorbonian's first-born Son, your rightful King restored!"

The People answer'd with a loud acclaim :  
Yet more ; — heart-smitten by the heroic deed,  
The reinstated Artegal became  
Earth's noblest penitent ; from bondage freed  
Of vice, — of vice unable to subvert  
Or shake his high desert.

Long did he reign ; and, when he died, the tear  
Of universal grief bedewed his honoured bier.

Thus was a Brother by a Brother saved ;  
With whom a Crown (temptation that hath set  
Discord in hearts of men till they have braved  
Their nearest kin with deadly purpose met)  
'Gainst duty weighed and faithful love, did seem

A thing of no esteem ;  
And, from this triumph of affection pure,  
He bore the lasting name of “ pious Elidure !”

## A FACT, AND AN IMAGINATION;

OR,

### *CANUTE AND ALFRED.*



THE Danish Conqueror, on his royal chair  
Mustering a face of haughtiest sovereignty,  
To aid a covert purpose, cried — “O ye  
Approaching waters of the deep, that share  
With this green isle my fortunes, come not where  
Your Master’s throne is set !” — Absurd decree !  
A mandate, uttered to the foaming sea,  
Is to its motions less than wanton air.  
— Then Canute, rising from the invaded Throne,  
Said to his servile courtiers, “Poor the reach,  
The undisguised extent, of mortal sway !  
He only is a king, and he alone  
Deserves the name, (this truth the billows preach)  
Whose everlasting laws, sea, earth, and heaven obey.”



This just reproof the prosperous Dane  
Drew, from the impulse of the Main,  
For some whose rugged northern mouths would strain  
At oriental flattery ;  
And Canute (truth more worthy to be known)  
From that time forth did for his brows disown  
The ostentatious symbol of a Crown ;  
Esteeming earthly royalty  
Contemptible and vain.

Now hear what one of elder days,  
Rich theme of England's fondest praise,  
Her darling Alfred, *might* have spoken ;  
To cheer the remnant of his host  
When he was driven from coast to coast,  
Distress'd and harass'd, but with mind unbroken ;  
“ My faithful Followers, lo ! the tide is spent ;  
That rose, and steadily advanced to fill  
The shores and channels, working Nature's will  
Among the mazy streams that backward went,

And in the sluggish pools where ships are pent.  
And now, its task perform'd, the Flood stands still  
At the green base of many an inland hill,  
In placid beauty and sublime content !  
Such the repose that Sage and Hero find ;  
Such measured rest the sedulous and good  
Of humbler name ; whose souls do, like the flood  
Of Ocean, press right on ; or gently wind,  
Neither to be diverted nor withstood,  
Until they reach the bounds by Heaven assigned."

TO ———.

THOSE silver clouds collected round the sun  
His mid-day warmth abate not, seeming less  
To overshadow than multiply his beams  
By soft reflection — grateful to the sky,  
To rocks, fields, woods. Nor doth our human sense  
Ask, for its pleasure, screen or canopy  
More ample than that time-dismantled Oak  
Spreads o'er this tuft of heath : which now, attired  
In the whole fulness of its bloom, affords  
As beautiful a couch as e'er on earth  
Was fashioned ; whether by the hand of art  
That Eastern Sultan, amid flowers enwrought  
On silken tissue, might diffuse his limbs  
In languor ; or, by Nature, for repose  
Of panting Wood-nymph weary of the chace.  
O Lady ! fairer in thy Poet's sight  
Than fairest spiritual Creature of the groves,  
Approach — and, thus invited, crown with rest

The noon-tide hour : — though truly some there are  
 Whose footsteps superstitiously avoid  
 This venerable Tree ; for, when the wind  
 Blows keenly, it sends forth a creaking sound,  
 Above the general roar of woods and crags ;  
 Distinctly heard from far — a doleful note  
 As if (so Grecian shepherds would have deem'd)  
 The Hamadryad, pent within, bewailed  
 Some bitter wrong. Nor is it unbelieved,  
 By ruder fancy, that a troubled Ghost  
 Haunts this old Trunk ; lamenting deeds of which  
 The flowery ground is conscious. But no wind  
 Sweeps now along this elevated ridge ;  
 Not even a zephyr stirs ; — the obnoxious Tree  
 Is mute, — and, in his silence, would look down  
 On thy reclining form with more delight  
 Than his Coevals in the sheltered vale  
 Seem to participate, the whilst they view  
 Their own far-stretching arms and leafy heads  
 Vividly pictured in some glassy pool,  
 That, for a brief space, checks the hurrying stream !

## SONNET.

---

THE Stars are Mansions built by Nature's hand ;  
And, haply, there the spirits of the blest  
Live, clothed in radiance, their immortal vest ;  
Huge Ocean frames, within his yellow strand,  
A Habitation marvellously planned,  
For life to occupy in love and rest ;  
All that we see — is dome, or vault, or nest,  
Or fort, erected at her sage command.  
Is this a vernal thought ? Even so, the Spring  
Gave it while cares were weighing on my heart,  
Mid song of birds, and insects murmuring ;  
And while the youthful year's prolific art —  
Of bud, leaf, blade, and flower — was fashioning  
Abodes, where self-disturbance hath no part.

## SONNET,

ON THE DETRACTION WHICH FOLLOWED THE PUBLICATION  
OF A CERTAIN POEM.

*See Milton's Sonnet, beginning*

"A Book was writ of late called 'Tetrachordon.'"

A BOOK came forth of late called, "Peter Bell;"  
Not negligent the style; — the matter? — good  
As aught that song records of Robin Hood;  
Or Roy, renowned through many a Scottish dell;  
But some (who brook these hacknied themes full well,  
Nor heat, at Tam o' Shanter's name, their blood)  
Wax'd wrath, and with foul claws, a harpy brood —  
On Bard and Hero clamorously fell.  
Heed not, wild Rover once through heath and glen  
Who mad'st at length the better life thy choice,  
Heed not such onset! nay, if praise of men  
To thee appear not an unmeaning voice,  
Lift up that grey-haired forehead, and rejoice  
In the just tribute of thy Poet's pen!

## SONNET,

ON SEEING A TUFT OF SNOWDROPS IN A STORM.

---

WHEN haughty expectations prostrate lie,  
And grandeur crouches like a guilty thing,  
Oft shall the lowly weak, till nature bring  
Mature release, in fair society  
Survive, and Fortune's utmost anger try;  
Like these frail snow-drops that together cling,  
And nod their helmets smitten by the wing  
Of many a furious whirlblast sweeping by.  
Observe the faithful flowers ! if small to great  
May lead the thoughts, thus struggling used to stand  
The Emathian phalanx, nobly obstinate ;  
And so the bright immortal Theban band,  
Whom onset, fiercely urged at Jove's command,  
Might overwhelm, but could not separate !

TO ———.

WITH A SELECTION FROM THE POEMS OF ANNE, COUNTESS  
OF WINCHELSEA; AND EXTRACTS OF SIMILAR CHARACTER  
FROM OTHER WRITERS; THE WHOLE TRANSCRIBED BY A  
FEMALE FRIEND.

---

LADY! I rifled a Parnassian Cave  
(But seldom trod) of mildly-gleaming ore;  
And cull'd, from sundry beds, a lucid store  
Of genuine crystals, pure as those that pave  
The azure brooks where Dian joys to lave  
Her spotless limbs; and ventur'd to explore  
Dim shades — for reliques, upon Lethe's shore,  
Cast up at random by the sullen wave.  
To female hands the treasures were resign'd;  
And lo this work! — a grotto bright and clear  
From stain or taint; in which thy blameless mind  
May feed on thoughts though pensive not austere;  
Or if thy deeper spirit be inclin'd  
To holy musing it may enter here.



ON THE  
DEATH OF HIS LATE MAJESTY.

---

WARD of the Law! — dread Shadow of a King!  
Whose Realm had dwindled to one stately room;  
Whose universe was gloom immers'd in gloom,  
Darkness as thick as Life o'er Life could fling,  
Yet haply cheered with some faint glimmering  
Of Faith and Hope; if thou by nature's doom  
Gently hast sunk into the quiet tomb,  
Why should we bend in grief, to sorrow cling,  
When thankfulness were best? — Fresh-flowing tears,  
Or, where tears flow not, sigh succeeding sigh,  
Yield to such after-thought the sole reply  
Which justly it can claim. The Nation hears  
In this deep knell — silent for threescore years,  
An unexampled voice of awful memory!

## INSCRIPTIONS,

SUPPOSED TO BE FOUND IN, AND NEAR, A HERMIT'S CELL.

---

### I.

HAST thou seen, with train incessant,  
Bubbles gliding under ice,  
Bodied forth and evanescent,  
No one knows by what device?

Such are thoughts! — a wind-swept meadow  
Mimicking a troubled sea —  
Such is life; — and death a shadow  
From the rock eternity!

\* \* \* \* \*

## II.

## INSCRIBED UPON A ROCK.

PAUSE, Traveller ! whosoe'er thou be  
Whom chance may lead to this retreat,  
Where silence yields reluctantly  
Even to the fleecy straggler's bleat ;

Give voice to what my hand shall trace,  
And fear not lest an idle sound  
Of words unsuited to the place,  
Disturb its solitude profound.

I saw this Rock, while vernal air  
Blew softly o'er the russet heath,  
Uphold a Monument as fair  
As Church or Abbey furnisheth.

Unsullied did it meet the day,  
Like marble white, like ether pure ;  
As if beneath some hero lay,  
Honour'd with costliest sepulture.

My fancy kindled as I gazed ;  
And, ever as the sun shone forth,  
The flatter'd structure glisten'd, blazed,  
And seemed the proudest thing on earth.

But Frost had reared the gorgeous Pile  
Unsound as those which fortune builds ;  
To undermine with secret guile,  
Sapp'd by the very beam that gilds.

And, while I gazed, with sudden shock  
Fell the whole Fabric to the ground ;  
And naked left this dripping Rock,  
With shapeless ruin spread around !

## III.

HOPES what are they? — Beads of morning  
Strung on slender blades of grass ;  
Or a spider's web adorning  
In a strait and treacherous pass.

What are fears but voices airy?  
Whispering harm where harm is not,  
And deluding the unwary  
Till the fatal bolt is shot !

What is glory? — in the socket  
See how dying Tapers fare !  
What is pride? — a whizzing rocket  
That would emulate a star.

What is friendship? — do not trust her,  
Nor the vows which she has made;  
Diamonds dart their brightest lustre  
From a palsy-shaken head.

What is truth? — a staff rejected;  
Duty? — an unwelcome clog;  
Joy? — a dazzling moon reflected  
In a swamp or watery bog;

Bright, as if through ether steering,  
To the Traveller's eye it shone:  
He hath hailed it re-appearing —  
And as quickly it is gone;

Gone, as if for ever hidden,  
Or misshapen to the sight;  
And by sullen weeds forbidden  
To resume its native light.

What is youth? — a dancing billow,  
Winds behind, and rocks before !  
Age ? — a drooping, tottering willow  
On a flat and lazy shore.

What is peace? — when pain is over,  
And love ceases to rebel,  
Let the last faint sigh discover  
That precedes the passing knell !

\* \* \* \* \*

## IV.

## NEAR THE SPRING OF THE HERMITAGE.

TROUBLED long with warring notions,  
Long impatient of thy rod,  
I resign my soul's emotions  
Unto Thee, mysterious God !

What avails the kindly shelter  
Yielded by this craggy rent,  
If my spirit toss and welter  
On the waves of discontent ?

Parching Summer hath no warrant  
To consume this crystal well ;  
Rains, that make each rill a torrent,  
Neither sully it nor swell.



Thus dishonouring not her station,  
Would my Life present to Thee,  
Gracious God, the pure oblation  
Of divine Tranquillity !

## V.

Not seldom, clad in radiant vest,  
Deceitfully goes forth the Morn ;  
Not seldom Evening in the west  
Sinks smilingly forsworn.

The smoothest seas will sometimes prove,  
To the confiding Bark, untrue ;  
And, if she trust the stars above,  
They can be treacherous too.

The umbrageous Oak, in pomp outspread,  
Full oft, when storms the welkin rend,  
Draws lightning down upon the head  
It promis'd to defend.

But Thou art true, incarnate Lord !  
Who didst vouchsafe for man to die ;  
Thy smile is sure, thy plighted word  
No change can falsify !

I bent before thy gracious throne,  
And asked for peace with suppliant knee ;  
And peace was given,—nor peace alone,  
But faith, and hope, and extacy !

THE PRIORESS'S TALE,

(FROM CHAUCER.)

*In the following Piece I have allowed myself no farther deviations from the original than were necessary for the fluent reading, and instant understanding, of the Author: so much however is the language altered since Chaucer's time, especially in pronunciation, that much was to be removed, and its place supplied with as little incongruity as possible. The ancient accent has been retained in a few conjunctions, such as alsō and alwāy, from a conviction that such sprinklings of antiquity would be admitted, by persons of taste, to have a graceful accordance with the subject.*

## THE PRIORESS'S TALE.

---

“ Call up him who left half told  
The story of Cambuscan bold.”

---

O LORD, our Lord ! how wonderously (quoth she)  
Thy name in this large world is spread abroad !  
For not alone by men of dignity  
Thy worship is performed and precious laud ;  
But by the mouths of children, gracious God !  
Thy goodness is set forth, they when they lie  
Upon the breast thy name do glorify.

Wherefore in praise, the worthiest that I may,  
Jesu ! of thee, and the white Lily-flower  
Which did thee bear, and is a maid for aye,  
To tell a story I will use my power ;  
Not that I may increase her honour's dower,  
For she herself is honour, and the root  
Of goodness, next her Son our soul's best boot.

O Mother Maid ! O Maid and Mother free !  
O bush unburnt ! burning in Moses' sight !  
That down didst ravish from the Deity,  
Through humbleness, the spirit that did alight  
Upon thy heart, whence, through that glory's might,  
Conceived was the Father's sapience,  
Help me to tell it in thy reverence !

Lady, thy goodness, thy magnificence,  
Thy virtue, and thy great humility,  
Surpass all science and all utterance ;  
For sometimes, Lady ! ere men pray to thee  
Thou go'st before in thy benignity,  
The light to us vouchsafing of thy prayer,  
To be our guide unto thy Son so dear.

My knowledge is so weak, O blissful Queen !  
To tell abroad thy mighty worthiness,  
That I the weight of it may not sustain ;  
But as a child of twelvemonths old or less,  
That laboureth his language to express,  
Even so fare I ; and therefore, I thee pray,  
Guide thou my song which I of thee shall say.

There was in Asia, in a mighty town,  
'Mong Christian folk, a street where Jews might be;  
Assigned to them and given them for their own  
By a great Lord, for gain and usury,  
Hateful to Christ and to his company;  
And through this street who list might ride and wend;  
Free was it, and unbarr'd at either end.

A little school of Christian people stood  
Down at the farther end, in which there were  
A nest of children come of Christian blood,  
That learned in that school from year to year  
Such sort of doctrine as men used there,  
That is to say, to sing and read also  
As little children in their childhood do.

Among these children was a widow's son,  
A little scholar, scarcely seven years old,  
Who day by day unto this school hath gone,  
And eke, when he the image did behold  
Of Jesu's Mother, as he had been told,  
This Child was wont to kneel adown and say  
*Ave Marie*, as he goeth by the way.

This Widow thus her little Son hath taught  
Our blissful Lady, Jesu's Mother dear,  
To worship aye, and he forgot it not,  
For simple infant hath a ready ear.  
Sweet is the holiness of youth : and hence,  
Calling to mind this matter when I may,  
Saint Nicholas in my presence standeth aye,  
For he so young to Christ did reverence.

This little Child, while in the school he sate  
His primer conning with an earnest cheer,  
The whilst the rest their anthem-book repeat  
The Alma Redemptoris did he hear ;  
And as he durst he drew him near and near,  
And hearkened to the words and to the note,  
'Till the first verse he learn'd it all by rote.

This Latin knew he nothing what it said  
For he too tender was of age to know ;  
But to his comrade he repaired, and prayed  
That he the meaning of this song would show,  
And unto him declare why men sing so ;  
This, oftentimes, that he might be at ease,  
This child did him beseech, on his bare knees.



His Schoolfellow, who elder was than he,  
Answered him thus; — “ This song, I have heard say,  
Was fashioned for our blissful Lady free;  
Her to salute, and also her to pray  
To be our help upon our dying day.  
If there is more in this I know it not;  
The song I learn, — small grammar I have got.

“ And is this song fashioned in reverence  
Of Jesu's Mother ?” said this Innocent,  
“ Now, certes, I will use my diligence  
To con it all ere Christinas-tide be spent;  
Although I for my Primer shall be shent,  
And shall be beaten three times in an hour,  
Our Lady I will praise with all my power.”

His Schoolfellow, whom he had so besought,  
As they went homeward taught him privily;  
And then he sang it well and fearlessly,  
From word to word according to the note :  
Twice in a day it passed through his throat ;  
Homeward and schoolward whensoever he went,  
On Jesu's Mother fixed was his intent.

Through all the Jewry (this before said I,)  
This little child, as he came to and fro,  
Full merrily then would he sing and cry,  
O Alma Redemptoris ! high and low :  
The sweetness of Christ's Mother pierced so  
His heart, that her to praise, to her to pray,  
He cannot stop his singing by the way.

The Serpent, Satan, our first foe, that hath  
His wasp's nest in Jew's heart, upswell'd — " O woe,  
O Hebrew people !" said he in his wrath,  
" Is it an honest thing ? Shall this be so ?  
That such a Boy where'er he list shall go  
In your despite, and sing his hymns and saws,  
Which is against the reverence of our laws !"

From that day forward have the Jews conspired  
Out of the world this Innocent to chace ;  
And to this end a Homicide they hired,  
That in an Alley had a privy place,  
And, as the Child 'gan to the School to pace,  
This cruel Jew him seized, and held him fast  
And cut his throat, and in a pit him cast.

I say that him into a pit they threw,  
A loathsome pit whence noisome scents exhale ;  
O cursed folk ! away ye Herods new !  
What may your ill intentions you avail ?  
Murder will out ; certes it will not fail ;  
Know, that the honour of high God may spread,  
The blood cries out on your accursed deed.

O Martyr 'stablished in virginity !  
Now may'st thou sing for aye before the throne,  
Following the Lamb celestial," quoth she,  
" Of which the great Evangelist, Saint John,  
In Patmos wrote, who saith of them that go  
Before the Lamb singing continually,  
That never fleshly woman they did know.

Now this poor widow waiteth all that night  
After her little Child, and he came not ;  
For which, by earliest glimpse of morning light,  
With face all pale with dread and busy thought  
She at the School and elsewhere him hath sought,  
Until thus far she learned, that he had been  
In the Jews' street, and there he last was seen.

With Mother's pity in her breast enclosed  
She goeth, as she were half out of her mind,  
To every place wherein she hath supposed  
By likelihood her little Son to find ;  
And ever on Christ's Mother meek and kind  
She cried, till to the Jewry she was brought,  
And him among the accursed Jews she sought.

She asketh, and she piteously doth pray  
To every Jew that dwelleth in that place  
To tell her if her Child had pass'd that way ;  
They all said Nay ; but Jesu of his grace  
Gave to her thought, that in a little space  
She for her Son in that same spot did cry  
Where he was cast into a pit hard by.

O thou great God that dost perform thy laud  
By mouths of Innocents, lo ! here thy might ;  
This gem of chastity, this emerald,  
And eke of martyrdom this ruby bright,  
There, where with mangled throat he lay upright,  
The Alma Redemptoris 'gan to sing  
So loud that with his voice the place did ring.

The Christian folk that through the Jewry went  
Come to the spot in wonder at the thing ;  
And hastily they for the Provost sent ;  
Immediately he came not tarrying,  
And praiseth Christ that is our heavenly King,  
And eke his Mother, honour of Mankind :  
Which done, he bade that they the Jews should bind.

This Child with piteous lamentation then  
Was taken up, singing his song alway ;  
And with procession great and pomp of men  
To the next Abbey him they bare away ;  
His Mother swooning by the Bier lay :  
And scarcely could the people that were near  
Remove this second Rachel from the Bier.

Torment and shameful death to every one  
This Provost doth for those bad Jews prepare  
That of this murder wist, and that anon :  
Such wickedness his judgments cannot spare ;  
Who will do evil, evil shall he bear ;  
Them therefore with wild horses did he draw,  
And after that he hung them by the law.

Upon his Bier this Innocent doth lie  
Before the Altar while the Mass doth last :  
The Abbot with his Convent's company  
Then sped themselves to bury him full fast ;  
And, when they holy water on him cast,  
Yet spake this Child when sprinkled was the water,  
And sang, O Alma Redemptoris Mater !

This Abbot who had been a holy man  
And was, as all Monks are, or ought to be,  
In supplication to the Child began  
Thus saying, " O dear Child ! I summon thee  
In virtue of the holy Trinity  
Tell me the cause why thou dost sing this hymn,  
Since that thy throat is cut, as it doth seem."

" My throat is cut unto the bone, I trow,"  
Said this young Child, " and by the law of kind  
I should have died, yea many hours ago ;  
But Jesus Christ, as in the books ye find,  
Will that his glory last, and be in mind ;  
And, for the worship of his Mother dear,  
Yet may I sing, O Alma ! loud and clear.

This well of mercy Jesu's Mother sweet  
After my knowledge I have loved alway,  
And in the hour when I my death did meet  
To me she came, and thus to me did say,  
"Thou in thy dying sing this holy lay,"  
As ye have heard; and soon as I had sung  
Methought she laid a grain upon my tongue.

Wherefore I sing, nor can from song refrain,  
In honour of that blissful Maiden free,  
'Till from my tongue off-taken is the grain;  
And after that thus said she unto me,  
"My little Child, then will I come for thee  
Soon as the grain from off thy tongue they take,  
Be not dismay'd, I will not thee forsake!"

This holy Monk, this Abbot — him mean I,  
Touched then his tongue, and took away the grain;  
And he gave up the ghost full peacefully;  
And, when the Abbot had this wonder seen,  
His salt tears trickled down like showers of rain,  
And on his face he dropped upon the ground,  
And still he lay as if he had been bound.

Eke the whole Convent on the pavement lay,  
Weeping and praising Jesu's Mother dear ;  
And after that they rose, and took their way  
And lifted up this Martyr from the Bier,  
And in a tomb of precious marble clear  
Enclos'd his uncorrupted body sweet. —  
Where'er he be, God grant us him to meet !

Young Hew of Lincoln ! in like sort laid low  
By cursed Jews — thing well and widely known,  
For not long since was dealt the cruel blow,  
Pray also thou for us, while here we tarry  
Weak sinful folk, that God, with pitying eye,  
In mercy would his mercy multiply  
On us, for reverence of his Mother Mary !



SEPTEMBER,

1819.

---

THE sylvan slopes with corn-clad fields  
Are hung, as if with golden shields,  
Bright trophies of the sun !  
Like a fair sister of the sky,  
Unruffled doth the blue Lake lie,  
The Mountains looking on.

And, sooth to say, yon vocal Grove  
Albeit uninspired by love,  
By love untaught to ring,  
May well afford to mortal ear  
An impulse more profoundly dear  
Than music of the Spring.

For *that* from turbulence and heat  
Proceeds, from some uneasy seat  
In Nature's struggling frame,  
Some region of impatient life;  
And jealousy, and quivering strife,  
Therein a portion claim.

This, this is holy ; — while I hear  
These vespers of another year,  
This hymn of thanks and praise,  
My spirit seems to mount above  
The anxieties of human love,  
And earth's precarious days.

But list ! — though winter storms be nigh,  
Unchecked is that soft harmony :  
There lives Who can provide  
For all his creatures ; and in Him,  
Even like the radiant Seraphim,  
These Choristers confide.

## UPON THE SAME OCCASION.

---

DEPARTING Summer hath assumed  
An aspect tenderly illumed,  
The gentlest look of Spring :  
That calls from yonder leafy shade  
Unfaded, yet prepared to fade,  
A timely caroling.

No faint and hesitating trill,  
Such tribute as to Winter chill  
The lonely red-breast pays !  
Clear, loud, and lively is the din,  
From social Warblers gathering in  
Their harvest of sweet lays.

Nor doth the example fail to cheer  
Me conscious that my leaf is sear,  
And yellow on the bough : —  
Fall, rosy garlands, from my head !  
Ye myrtle wreaths, your fragrance shed  
Around a younger brow !

Yet will I temperately rejoice ;  
Wide is the range, and free the choice  
Of undiscordant themes ;  
Which, haply, kindred souls may prize  
Not less than vernal extacies,  
And passion's feverish dreams.

For deathless powers to verse belong,  
And they like Demi-gods are strong  
On whom the Muses smile ;  
But some their function have disclaimed,  
Best pleased with what is aptliest framed  
To enervate and defile.

Not such the initiatory strains  
Committed to the silent plains  
In Britain's earliest dawn ;  
Trembled the groves, the stars grew pale,  
While all-too-daringly the veil  
Of Nature was withdrawn !

Nor, such the spirit-stirring note  
When the live chords Alcæus smote,  
Inflamed by sense of wrong ;  
Woe ! woe to Tyrants ! from the lyre  
Broke threateningly, in sparkles dire  
Of fierce vindictive song.

And not unhallow'd was the page  
By winged Love inscrib'd, to assuage  
The pangs of vain pursuit ;  
Love listening while the Lesbian Maid  
With passion's finest finger swayed  
Her own CEolian lute.

O ye who patiently explore  
The wreck of Herculanean lore,  
What rapture could ye seize  
Some Theban fragment, or unroll  
One precious, tender-hearted scroll  
Of pure Simonides !

That were, indeed, a genuine birth  
Of poesy ; a bursting forth  
Of Genius from the dust :  
What Horace boasted to behold,  
What Maro loved, shall we enfold ?  
Can haughty Time be just !

## ODE,

COMPOSED UPON AN EVENING OF EXTRAORDINARY SPLENDOR  
AND BEAUTY.

---

### I.

HAD this effulgence disappeared  
With flying haste, I might have sent  
Among the speechless clouds a look  
Of blank astonishment;  
But 'tis endued with power to stay,  
And sanctify one closing day,  
That frail Mortality may see,  
What is? — ah no, but what *can* be!  
Time was when field and watery cove  
With modulated echoes rang,  
While choirs of fervent Angels sang  
Their vespers in the grove;  
Or, ranged like stars along some sovereign height,  
Warbled, for heaven above and earth below,  
Strains suitable to both. — Such holy rite,  
Methinks, if audibly repeated now

From hill or valley, could not move  
 Sublimar transport, purer love,  
 Than doth this silent spectacle — the gleam —  
 The shadow — and the peace supreme !

## II.

No sound is uttered, — but a deep  
 And solemn harmony pervades  
 The hollow vale from steep to steep,  
 And penetrates the glades.  
 Far-distant images draw nigh,  
 Call'd forth by wond'rous potency  
 Of beamy radiance, that imbues  
 Whate'er it strikes, with gem-like hues !  
 In vision exquisitely clear,  
 Herds range along the mountain side;  
 And glistening antlers are descried;  
 And gilded flocks appear.  
 Thine is the tranquil hour, purpureal Eve !  
 But long as god-like wish, or hope divine,  
 Informs my spirit, ne'er can I believe  
 That this magnificence is wholly thine !



— From worlds not quickened by the sun,  
 A portion of the gift is won ;  
 An intermingling of Heaven's pomp is spread  
 On ground which British shepherds tread !

### III.

And, if there be whom broken ties  
 Afflict, or injuries assail,  
 Yon hazy ridges to their eyes,  
 Present a glorious scale,  
 Climbing suffused with sunny air,  
 To stop — no record hath told where !  
 And tempting fancy to ascend,  
 And with immortal spirits blend !  
 — Wings at my shoulder seem to play ;  
 But, rooted here, I stand and gaze  
 On those bright steps that heaven-ward raise  
 Their practicable way.  
 Come forth, ye drooping old men, look abroad  
 And see to what fair countries ye are bound !

And if some Traveller, weary of his road,  
 Hath slept since noon-tide on the grassy ground,  
 Ye Genii ! to his covert speed ;  
 And wake him with such gentle heed  
 As may attune his soul to meet the dow'r  
 Bestowed on this transcendent hour !

## IV.

Such hues from their celestial Urn  
 Were wont to stream before my eye,  
 Where'er it wandered in the morn  
 Of blissful infancy.  
 This glimpse of glory, why renewed ?  
 Nay, rather speak with gratitude ;  
 For, if a vestige of those gleams  
 Surviv'd, 'twas only in my dreams.  
 Dread Power ! whom peace and calmness serve  
 No less than Nature's threatening voice,  
 If aught unworthy be my choice,  
 From THEE if I would swerve,

O, let thy grace remind me of the light,  
 Full early lost and fruitlessly deplored ;  
 Which, at this moment, on my waking sight  
 Appears to shine, by miracle restored !  
 My soul, though yet confined to earth,  
 Rejoices in a second birth ;  
 — 'Tis past, the visionary splendour fades,  
 And Night approaches with her shades.

## NOTE.

THE multiplication of mountain-ridges, described, at the commencement of the third stanza of this Ode, as a kind of Jacob's Ladder, leading to Heaven, is produced either by watery vapours, or sunny haze, — in the present instance by the latter cause. See the account of the Lakes at the end of this volume. The reader, who is acquainted with the Author's Ode, intitled, "Intimations of Immortality, &c." will recognize the allusion to it that pervades the last stanza of the foregoing Poem.

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“ *A LITTLE* onward lend thy guiding hand  
To these dark steps, a little further on !”

— What trick of memory to *my* voice hath brought,  
This mournful iteration ? For though Time,  
The Conqueror, crowns the Conquer'd, on this brow  
Planting his favourite silver diadem,  
Nor he, nor minister of his intent  
To run before him, hath enrolled me yet,  
Though not unmenaced, among those who lean  
Upon a living staff, with borrowed sight.

— O my Antigone, beloved child !  
Should that day come — but hark ! the birds salute  
The cheerful dawn brightening for me the east ;  
For me, thy natural Leader, once again  
Impatient to conduct thee, not as erst  
A tottering Infant, with compliant stoop

From flower to flower supported; but to curb  
 Thy nymph-like step swift-bounding o'er the lawn,  
 Along the loose rocks, or the slippery verge  
 Of foaming torrents. — From thy orisons  
 Come forth; and, while the morning air is yet  
 Transparent as the soul of innocent youth,  
 Let me, thy happy Guide, now point thy way,  
 And now precede thee, winding to and fro,  
 Till we by perseverance gain the top  
 Of some smooth ridge, whose brink precipitous  
 Kindles intense desire for powers withheld  
 From this corporeal frame; whereon who stands,  
 Is seized with strong incitement to push forth  
 His arms, as swimmers use, and plunge—dread thought!  
 For pastime plunge — into the “ abrupt abyss,”  
 Where Ravens spread their plummy vans, at ease!

And yet more gladly thee would I conduct  
 Through woods and spacious forests, — to behold  
 There, how the Original of human art,  
 Heaven-prompted Nature, measures and erects  
 Her temples, fearless for the stately work,

Though waves in every breeze its high-arched roof,  
 And storms the pillars rock. But we such schools  
 Of reverential awe will chiefly seek  
 In the still summer noon, while beams of light,  
 Reposing here, and in the aisles beyond  
 Traceably gliding through the dusk, recall  
 To mind the living presences of nuns;  
 A gentle, pensive, white-robed sisterhood,  
 Whose saintly radiance mitigates the gloom  
 Of those terrestrial fabrics, where they serve,  
 To Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, espoused.

Re-open now thy everlasting gates,  
 Thou Fane of holy writ! Ye classic Domes,  
 To these glad orbs from darksome bondage freed,  
 Unfold again your portals! Passage lies  
 Through you to heights more glorious still, and shades  
 More awful, where this Darling of my care,  
 Advancing with me hand in hand, may learn  
 Without forsaking a too earnest world,  
 To calm the affections, elevate the soul,  
 And consecrate her life to truth and love.

## ODE.

### THE PASS OF KIRKSTONE.

---

#### I.

WITHIN the mind strong fancies work,  
A deep delight the bosom thrills,  
Oft as I pass along the fork  
Of these fraternal hills :  
Where, save the rugged road, we find  
No appanage of human kind ;  
Nor hint of man, if stone or rock  
Seem not his handy-work to mock  
By something cognizably shaped ;  
Mockery — or model — roughly hewn,  
And left as if by earthquake strewn,  
Or from the Flood escaped : —  
Altars for Druid service fit ;  
(But where no fire was ever lit

Unless the glow-worm to the skies  
 Thence offer nightly sacrifice ;)  
 Wrinkled Egyptian monument ;  
 Green moss-grown tower ; or hoary tent ;  
 Tents of a camp that never shall be raised ;  
 On which four thousand years have gazed !

## II.

Ye plowshares sparkling on the slopes !  
 Ye snow-white lambs that trip  
 Imprison'd mid the formal props  
 Of restless ownership !  
 Ye trees that may to-morrow fall,  
 To feed the insatiate Prodigal !  
 Lawns, houses, chattels, groves, and fields,  
 All that the fertile valley shields ;  
 Wages of folly — baits of crime, —  
 Of life's uneasy game the stake, —  
 Playthings that keep the eyes awake  
 Of drowsy, dotard Time ; —



O care ! O guilt ! — O vales and plains,  
 Here, mid his own unvexed domains,  
 A Genius dwells, that can subdue  
 At once all memory of You, —  
 Most potent when mists veil the sky,  
 Mists that distort and magnify ;  
 While the coarse rushes, to the sweeping breeze,  
 Sigh forth their ancient melodies !

### III.

List to those shriller notes ! — *that* march  
 Perchance was on the blast,  
 When through this Height's inverted arch  
 Rome's earliest legion passed !  
 — They saw, adventurously impell'd,  
 And older eyes than theirs beheld,  
 This block — and yon whose Church-like frame  
 Gives to the savage Pass its name.

Aspiring Road ! that lov'st to hide  
 Thy daring in a vapoury bourn,  
 Not seldom may the hour return  
 When thou shalt be my Guide ;  
 And I (as often we find cause,  
 When life is at a weary pause,  
 And we have panted up the hill  
 Of duty with reluctant will)  
 Be thankful, even though tired and faint,  
 For the rich bounties of Constraint ;  
 Whence oft invigorating transports flow  
 That Choice lacked courage to bestow !

## IV.

My soul was grateful for delight  
 That wore a threatening brow ;  
 A veil is lifted — can she slight  
 The scene that opens now ?  
 Though habitation none appear,  
 The greenness tells, man must be there ;

The shelter — that the perspective  
 Is of the clime in which we live;  
 Where Toil pursues his daily round;  
 Where Pity sheds sweet tears, and Love,  
 In woodbine bower or birchen grove,  
 Inflicts his tender wound.  
 — Who comes not hither ne'er shall know  
 How beautiful the world below;  
 Nor can he guess how lightly leaps  
 The brook adown the rocky steeps.  
 Farewell thou desolate Domain!  
 Hope, pointing to the cultur'd Plain,  
 Carols like a shepherd boy;  
 And who is she? — can that be Joy?  
 Who, with a sun-beam for her guide,  
 Smoothly skims the meadows wide;  
 While Faith, from yonder opening cloud,  
 To hill and vale proclaims aloud,  
 “Whate'er the weak may dread the wicked dare,  
 Thy lot, O man, is good, thy portion fair!”

ODE. — 1817.

BENEATH the concave of an April sky,  
When all the fields with freshest green were dight,  
Appeared, in presence of that spiritual eye  
That aids or supersedes our grosser sight,  
The form and rich habiliments of One  
Whose countenance bore resemblance to the sun,  
When it reveals, in evening majesty,  
Features half lost amid their own pure light.  
Poised in the middle region of the air  
He hung, — then floated with angelic ease,  
Softening that bright effulgence by degrees,  
Until he reached a rock, of summit bare,  
Where oft the vent'rous Heifer drinks the summer breeze.  
Upon the apex of that lofty cone  
Alighted, there the Stranger stood alone;  
Fair as a gorgeous Fabric of the East

Suddenly raised by some Enchanter's power,  
 Where nothing was ; and firm as some old Tower  
 Of Britain's realm, whose leafy crest  
 Waves high, embellish'd by a gleaming shower !

## II.

Beneath the shadow of his purple wings  
 Rested a golden Harp ; — he touch'd the strings ;  
 And, after prelude of unearthly sound  
 Poured through the echoing hills around,  
 He sang, “ No wintry desolations,  
 “ Scorching blight, or noxious dew,  
 “ Affect my native habitations ;  
 “ Buried in glory, far beyond the scope  
 “ Of man's enquiring gaze, and imaged to his hope  
 “ (Alas, how faintly !) in the hue  
 “ Profound of night's ethereal blue ;  
 “ And in the aspect of each radiant orb ; —  
 “ Some fix'd, some wandering with no timid curb ;  
 “ But wandering orb and fix'd, to mortal eye,  
 “ Blended in absolute serenity,

“ And free from semblance of decline;—

“ So wills eternal Love and Power divine.

### III.

“ And what if his presiding breath

“ Impart a sympathetic motion

“ Unto the gates of life and death,

“ Throughout the bounds of earth and ocean;

“ Though all that feeds on nether air,

“ Howe’er magnificent or fair,

“ Grows but to perish, and entrust

“ Its ruins to their kindred dust ;

“ Yet, by the Almighty’s ever-during care,

“ Her procreant vigils Nature keeps

“ Amid the unfathomable deeps ;

“ And saves the peopled fields of earth

“ From dread of emptiness or dearth.

“ Thus, in their stations, lifting tow’rd the sky

“ The foliag’d head in cloud-like majesty,

“ The shadow-casting race of Trees survive:

“ Thus, in the train of Spring, arrive

" Sweet Flowers ; — what living eye hath viewed  
 " Their myriads ? — endlessly renewed,  
 " Wherever strikes the sun's glad ray ;  
 " Where'er the joyous waters stray ;  
 " Wherever sportive zephyrs bend  
 " Their course, or genial showers descend !  
 " Rejoice, O men ! the very Angels quit  
 " Their mansions unsusceptible of change,  
 " Amid your pleasant bowers to sit,  
 " And through your sweet vicissitudes to range !"

## IV.

O, nursed at happy distance from the cares  
 Of a too-anxious world, mild pastoral Muse !  
 That, to the sparkling crown Urania wears,  
 And to her sister Clio's laurel wreath,  
 Prefer'st a garland cull'd from purple heath,  
 Or blooming thicket moist with morning dews ;  
 Was such bright Spectacle vouchsafed to me ?  
 And was it granted to the simple ear  
 Of thy contented Votary  
 Such melody to hear !

*Him* rather suits it, side by side with thee,  
 Wrapped in a fit of pleasing indolence,  
 While thy tired lute hangs on the hawthorn tree,  
 To lie and listen, till oer-drowsed sense  
 Sinks, hardly conscious of the influence,  
 To the soft murmur of the vagrant Bee.  
 — A slender sound ! yet hoary Time  
 Doth, to the *Soul* exalt it with the chime  
 Of all his years ; — a company  
 Of ages coming, ages gone ;  
 Nations from before them sweeping —  
 Regions in destruction steeping ; —  
 But every awful note in unison  
 With that faint utterance, which tells  
 Of treasure sucked from buds and bells,  
 For the pure keeping of those waxen cells ;  
 Where She, a statist prudent to confer  
 Upon the public weal ; a warrior bold, —  
 Radiant all over with unburnished gold,



And armed with living spear for mortal fight;

A cunning forager

That spreads no waste; — a social builder, one

In whom all busy offices unite

With all fine functions that afford delight,

Safe through the winter storm in quiet dwells!

# V.

And is She brought within the power

Of vision? — o'er this tempting flower

Hovering until the petals stay

Her flight, and take its voice away?

Observe each wing — a tiny van! —

The structure of her laden thigh;

How fragile! — yet of ancestry

Mysteriously remote and high;

High as the imperial front of man,

The roseate bloom on woman's cheek;

The soaring eagle's curved beak;

The white plumes of the floating swan;

Old as the tyger's paws, the lion's mane  
Ere shaken by that mood of stern disdain  
At which the desert trembles. — Humming Bee !  
Thy sting was needless then, perchance unknown ;  
The seeds of malice were not sown ;  
All creatures met in peace, from fierceness free,  
And no pride blended with their dignity.  
— Tears had not broken from their source ;  
Nor anguish strayed from her Tartarian den :  
The golden years maintained a course  
Not undiversified, though smooth and even ;  
We were not mocked with glimpse and shadow then ;  
Bright Seraphs mixed familiarly with men ;  
And earth and stars composed a universal heaven !

TOPOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION  
OF  
THE COUNTRY OF THE LAKES  
IN  
*The North of England.*

*This Essay, which was published several years ago as an Introduction to some Views of the Lakes, by the Rev. Joseph Wilkinson, (an expensive work, and necessarily of limited circulation,) is now, with emendations and additions, attached to these volumes; from a consciousness of its having been written in the same spirit which dictated several of the poems, and from a belief that it will tend materially to illustrate them.*

TOPOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION  
OF  
THE COUNTRY OF THE LAKES.

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AT Lucerne in Switzerland there existed, some years ago, a model of the Alpine country which encompasses the Lake of the four Cantons. The spectator ascended a little platform, and saw mountains, lakes, glaciers, rivers, woods, waterfalls, and valleys with their cottages and every other object contained in them, lying at his feet; all things being represented in their appropriate colours. It may be easily conceived that this exhibition afforded an exquisite delight to the imagination, which was thus tempted to wander at will from valley to valley, from mountain to mountain, through the deepest recesses of the Alps. But it supplied also a more sub-

stantial pleasure; for the sublime and beautiful region, with all its hidden treasures, and their bearings and relations to each other, was thereby comprehended and understood at once.

Something of this kind (as far as it can be performed by words, which must needs be inadequately) will here be attempted in respect to the Lakes in the north of England, and the vales and mountains enclosing and surrounding them. The delineation if tolerably executed will in some instances communicate to the traveller, who has already seen the objects, new information; and will assist in giving to his recollections a more orderly arrangement than his own opportunities of observing may have permitted him to make; while it will be still more useful to the future traveller, by directing his attention at once to distinctions in things which, without such previous aid, a length of time only could enable him to discover. It is hoped, also, that this Essay may become generally serviceable by leading to habits of more exact and considerate observation than, as far as the writer knows, have hitherto been applied to local scenery.

To begin, then, with the main outlines of the country. I know not how to give the reader a distinct image of these more readily, than by requesting him to place himself with me, in imagination, upon some given point; let it be the top of either of the mountains, Great Gavel, or Scawfell; or, rather, let us suppose our station to be a cloud hanging midway between these two mountains, at not more than half a mile's distance from the summit of each, and not many yards above their highest elevation; we shall then see stretched at our feet a number of valleys, not fewer than nine, diverging from the point, on which we are supposed to stand, like spokes from the nave of a wheel. First, we note, lying to the south-east, the vale of Langdale, which will conduct the eye to the long Lake of Winandermere stretched nearly to the sea; or rather to the sands of the vast bay of Morcamb, serving here for the rim of this imaginary wheel;—let us trace it in a direction from the south-east towards the south, and we shall next fix our eyes upon the vale of Coniston, running up likewise from the sea, but not (as all the other valleys do) to the nave of the wheel, and therefore it may not

be inaptly represented as a broken spoke sticking in the rim. Looking forth again, with an inclination towards the west, immediately at our feet lies the vale of Duddon, in which is no lake, but a copious stream winding among fields, rocks, and mountains, and terminating its course in the sands of Duddon. The fourth valley next to be observed, viz. that of Eskdale, is of the same general character as the last, yet beautifully discriminated from it by peculiar features. Next, almost due west, look down upon, and into, the deep valley of Wastdale, with its little chapel and half a dozen neat scattered dwellings, a plain of meadow and corn-ground intersected with stone walls apparently innumerable, like a large piece of lawless patch-work, or an array of mathematical figures, such as in the ancient schools of geometry might have been sportively and fantastically traced out upon sand. Beyond this little fertile plain lies, within its bed of steep mountains, the long, narrow, stern, and desolate Lake of Wastdale; and beyond this a dusky tract of level ground conducts the eye to the Irish Sea. The several vales of Ennerdale and Buttermere, with their lakes, next pre-



sent themselves; and lastly, the vale of Borrowdale, of which that of Keswick is only a continuation, stretching due north, brings us to a point nearly opposite to the vale of Winandermere with which we began. From this it will appear, that the image of a wheel thus far exact, is little more than one half complete; but the deficiency on the eastern side may be supplied by the vales of Wytheburn, Ulswater, Hawswater, and the vale of Grasmere and Rydal; none of these, however, run up to the central point between Great Gavel and Scawfell. From this, hitherto our central point, take a flight of not more than three or four miles eastward to the ridge of Helvellyn, and you will look down upon Wytheburn and St. John's Vale, which are a branch of the vale of Keswick; upon Ulswater, stretching due east, and not far beyond to the south-east, (though from this point not visible,) lie the vale and lake of Hawswater; and lastly, the vale of Grasmere, Rydal, and Ambleside, brings you back to Winandermere, thus completing, though on the eastern side in a somewhat irregular manner, the representative figure of the wheel.

Such, concisely given, is the general topographical view of the country of the Lakes in the north of England; and it may be observed, that, from the circumference to the centre, that is, from the sea or plain country to the mountain stations specified, there is—in the several ridges that enclose these vales and divide them from each other, I mean in the forms and surfaces, first of the swelling grounds, next of the hills and rocks, and lastly of the mountains—an ascent of almost regular gradation from elegance and richness to the highest point of grandeur. It follows therefore from this, first, that these rocks, hills, and mountains, must present themselves to view in stages rising above each other, the mountains clustering together towards the central point; and, next, that an observer familiar with the several vales, must, from their various position in relation to the sun, have had before his eyes every possible embellishment of beauty, dignity, and splendour, which light and shadow can bestow upon objects so diversified. For example, in the vale of Winandermere, if the spectator looks for gentle and lovely scenes, his eye is turned towards the

south; if for the grand, towards the north; in the vale of Keswick, which (as hath been said) lies almost due north of this, it is directly the reverse. Hence, when the sun is setting in summer far to the north-west, it is seen by the spectator from the shores or breast of Winandermere, resting among the summits of the loftiest mountains, some of which will perhaps be half or wholly hid by clouds, or by the blaze of light which the orb diffuses around it; and the surface of the lake will reflect before the eye correspondent colours through every variety of beauty, and through all degrees of splendour. In the vale of Keswick, at the same period, the sun sets over the humbler regions of the landscape, and showers down upon *them* the radiance which at once veils and glorifies, — sending forth, meanwhile, broad streams of rosy, crimson purple, or golden light, towards the grand mountains in the south and south-east, which, thus illuminated, with all their projections and cavities, and with an intermixture of solemn shadows, are seen distinctly through a cool and clear atmosphere. Of course, there is as marked a difference between the *noontide* appearance of these two

opposite vales. The bedimmed haze that overspreads the south, and the clear atmosphere and determined shadows of the clouds in the north, at the same time of the day, are each seen in these several vales, with a contrast as striking. The reader will easily perceive in what degree the intermediate vales partake of the same variety.

I do not indeed know any tract of country in which, within so narrow a compass, may be found an equal variety in the influences of light and shadow upon the sublime or beautiful features of landscape; and it is owing to the combined circumstances to which I have directed the reader's attention. From a point between Great Gavel and Scawfell, a shepherd would not require more than an hour to descend into any one of eight of the principal vales by which he would be surrounded; and all the others lie (with the exception of Hawswater) at but a small distance. Yet, though clustered together, every valley has its distinct and separate character; in some instances, as if they had been formed in studied contrast to each other, and in others with the united

pleasing differences and resemblances of a sisterly rivalry. This concentration of interest gives to the country a decided superiority over the most attractive districts of Scotland and Wales, especially for the pedestrian traveller. In Scotland and Wales are found undoubtedly individual scenes, which, in their several kinds, cannot be excelled. But, in Scotland, particularly, what desolate and unimpressive tracts of country almost perpetually intervene ! so that the traveller, when he reaches a spot deservedly of great celebrity, would find it difficult to determine how much of his pleasure is owing to excellence inherent in the landscape itself ; and how much to an instantaneous recovery from an oppression left upon his spirits by the barrenness and desolation through which he has passed.

But, to proceed with our survey ; — and, first, of the MOUNTAINS. Their *forms* are endlessly diversified, sweeping easily or boldly in simple majesty, abrupt and precipitous, or soft and elegant. In magnitude and grandeur they are individually inferior to the most celebrated of those in some other parts of this island ; but, in the

combinations which they make," towering above each other, or lifting themselves in ridges like the waves of a tumultuous sea, and in the beauty and variety of their surfaces and their colours, they are surpassed by none.

The general *surface* of the mountains is turf, rendered rich and green by the moisture of the climate. Sometimes the turf, as in the neighbourhood of Newlands, is little broken, the whole covering being soft and downy pasturage. In other places rocks predominate; the soil is laid bare by torrents and burstings of water from the sides of the mountains in heavy rains; and occasionally their perpendicular sides are seamed by ravines (formed also by rains and torrents) which, meeting in angular points, entrench and scar over the surface with numerous figures like the letters W and Y.

The MOUNTAINS are composed of the stone by mineralogists termed schist, which, as you approach the plain country, gives place to lime-stone and free-stone; but schist being the substance of the mountains, the predominant *colour* of their *rocky* parts is bluish, or hoary gray — the general tint of the lichens with which

the bare stone is encrusted. With this blue or grey colour is frequently intermixed a red tinge, proceeding from the iron that interveins the stone, and impregnates the soil. The iron is the principle of decomposition in these rocks; and hence, when they become pulverized, the elementary particles crumbling down overspread in many places the steep and almost precipitous sides of the mountains with an intermixture of colours, like the compound hues of a dove's neck. When, in the heat of advancing summer, the fresh green tint of the herbage has somewhat faded, it is again revived by the appearance of the fern profusely spread every where; and, upon this plant, more than upon any thing else, do the changes which the seasons make in the colouring of the mountains depend. About the first week in October, the rich green, which prevailed through the whole summer, is usually passed away. The brilliant and various colours of the fern are then in harmony with the autumnal woods; bright yellow or lemon colour, at the base of the mountains, melting gradually, through orange, to a dark russet brown towards the summits, where the plant being more

exposed to the weather is in a more advanced state of decay. Neither heath nor furze are *generally* found upon the *sides* of these mountains, though in some places they are richly adorned by them. We may add, that the mountains are of height sufficient to have the surface towards the summits softened by distance, and to imbibe the finest aërial hues. In common also with other mountains, their apparent forms and colours are perpetually changed by the clouds and vapours which float round them: the effect indeed of mist or haze, in a country of this character, is like that of magic. I have seen six or seven ridges rising above each other, all created in a moment by the vapours upon the side of a mountain, which, in its ordinary appearance, showed not a projecting point, to furnish even a hint for such an operation.

I will take this opportunity of observing, that they, who have studied the appearances of nature, feel that the superiority, in point of visual interest, of mountainous over other countries.—is more strikingly displayed in winter than in summer. This, as must be obvious, is



partly owing to the *forms* of the mountains, which, of course, are not affected by the seasons; but also, in no small degree, to the greater variety that exists in their winter than their summer *colouring*. This variety is such, and so harmoniously preserved, that it leaves little cause of regret when the splendour of autumn is passed away. The oak-coppices, upon the sides of the mountains, retain russet leaves; the birch stands conspicuous with its silver stem and puce-coloured twigs; the hollies, with green leaves and scarlet berries, have come forth to view from among the deciduous trees, whose summer foliage had concealed them; the ivy is now plentifully apparent upon the stems and boughs of the trees, and among the woody rocks. In place of the uniform summer-green of the herbage and fern, many rich colours play into each other over the surface of the mountains; turf (the tints of which are interchangeably tawny-green, olive, and brown,) beds of withered fern, and grey rocks, being harmoniously blended together. The mosses and lichens are never so fresh and flourishing as in winter, if it be not a season of frost; and their minute beauties prodi-

gally adorn the fore-ground. Wherever we turn, we find these productions of nature, to which winter is rather favourable than unkindly, scattered over the walls, banks of earth, rocks, and stones, and upon the trunks of trees, with the intermixture of several species of small fern, now green and fresh; and, to the observing passenger, their forms and colours are a source of inexhaustible admiration. Add to this the hoar-frost and snow, with all the varieties they create, and which volumes would not be sufficient to describe. I will content myself with one instance of the colouring produced by snow, which may not be uninteresting to painters. It is extracted from the memorandum-book of a friend; and for its accuracy I can speak, having been an eye-witness of the appearance. “I observed,” says he, “the beautiful effect of the drifted snow upon the mountains, and the perfect *tone* of colour. From the top of the mountains downwards a rich olive was produced by the powdery snow and the grass, which olive was warmed with a little brown, and in this way harmoniously combined, by insensible gradations, with the white. The drifting

took away the monotony of snow; and the whole vale of Grasmere, seen from the terrace walk in Easedale, was as varied, perhaps more so, than even in the pomp of autumn. In the distance was Loughrigg-Fell, the basin-wall of the lake: this, from the summit downward, was a rich orange-olive; then the lake of a bright olive-green, nearly the same tint as the snow-powdered mountain tops and high slopes in Easedale; and lastly, the church with its firs forming the centre of the view. Next to the church with its firs, came nine distinguishable hills, six of them with woody sides turned towards us, all of them oak-copses with their bright red leaves and snow-powdered twigs; these hills — so variously situated to each other, and to the view in general, so variously powdered, some only enough to give the herbage a rich brown tint, one intensely white and lighting up all the others — were yet so placed, as in the most inobtrusive manner to harmonise by contrast with a perfect naked, snowless bleak summit in the far distance.”

Having spoken of the forms, surface, and colour of the mountains, let us descend into the VALLEYS. Though

these have been represented under the general image of the spokes of a wheel, they are, for the most part, winding; the windings of many being abrupt and intricate. And, it may be observed, that, in one circumstance, the general shape of them all has been determined by that primitive conformation through which so many became receptacles of lakes. For they are not formed, as are most of the celebrated Welsh valleys, by an approximation of the sloping bases of the opposite mountains towards each other, leaving little more between than a channel for the passage of a hasty river; but the bottom of these valleys is, for the most part, a spacious and gently declining area, apparently level as the floor of a temple, or the surface of a lake, and beautifully broken, in many cases, by rocks and hills, which rise up like islands from the plain. In such of the valleys as make many windings, these level areas open upon the traveller in succession, divided from each other sometimes by a mutual approximation of the hills, leaving only passage for a river, sometimes by correspondent windings, without such approximation; and sometimes by a bold ad-

vance of one mountain towards that which is opposite to it. It may here be observed with propriety, that the several rocks and hills, which have been described as rising up like islands from the level area of the vale, have regulated the choice of the inhabitants in the situation of their dwellings. Where none of these are found, and the inclination of the ground is not sufficiently rapid easily to carry off the waters, (as in the higher part of Langdale, for instance,) the houses are not sprinkled over the middle part of the vales, but confined to their sides, being placed merely so far up the mountain as to protect them from the floods. But where these rocks and hills have been scattered over the plain of the vale, (as in Grasmere, Donnerdale, Eskdale, &c.) the beauty which they give to the scene is much heightened by a single cottage, or cluster of cottages, that will be almost always found under them or upon their sides; dryness and shelter having tempted the Dalesmen to fix their habitations there.

I shall now speak of the LAKES of this country. The form of the lake is most perfect when, like Derwent-

water and some of the smaller lakes, it least resembles that of a river; — I mean, when being looked at from any given point where the whole may be seen at once, the width of it bears such proportion to the length, that, however the outline may be diversified by far-shooting bays, it never assumes the shape of a river, and is contemplated with that placid and quiet feeling which belongs peculiarly to the lake — as a body of still water under the influence of no current; reflecting therefore the clouds, the light, and all the imagery of the sky and surrounding hills; expressing also and making visible the changes of the atmosphere, and motions of the lightest breeze, and subject to agitation only from the winds —

——— The visible scene

Would enter unawares into his mind  
With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,  
Its woods, and that uncertain heaven received  
Into the bosom of the *steady* lake!

It must be noticed, as a favourable characteristic of the lakes of this country, that, though several of the largest,

such as Winandermere, Ulswater, Hawswater, &c. do, when the whole length of them is commanded from an elevated point, lose somewhat of the peculiar form of the lake, and assume the resemblance of a magnificent river; yet, as their shape is winding, (particularly that of Ulswater and Hawswater) when the view of the whole is obstructed by those barriers which determine the windings, and the spectator is confined to one reach, the appropriate feeling is revived; and one lake may thus in succession present to the eye the essential characteristic of many. But, though the forms of the large lakes have this advantage, it is nevertheless a circumstance favourable to the beauty of the country, that the largest of them are comparatively small; and that the same valley generally furnishes a succession of lakes, instead of being filled with one. The valleys in North Wales, as hath been observed, are not formed for the reception of lakes; those of Switzerland, Scotland, and this part of the north of England, are so formed; but, in Switzerland and Scotland, the proportion of diffused water is often too great, as at the lake of Geneva for instance, and in most of the

Scotch lakes. No doubt it sounds magnificent and flatters the imagination to hear at a distance of expanses of water so many leagues in length and miles in width ; and such ample room may be delightful to the fresh-water sailor scudding with a lively breeze amid the rapidly-shifting scenery. But, who ever travelled along the banks of Loch-Lomond, variegated as the lower part is by islands, without feeling that a speedier termination of the long vista of blank water would be acceptable ; and without wishing for an interposition of green meadows, trees, and cottages, and a sparkling stream to run by his side ? In fact, a notion of grandeur, as connected with magnitude, has seduced persons of taste into a general mistake upon this subject. It is much more desirable, for the purposes of pleasure, that lakes should be numerous, and small or middle-sized, than large, not only for communication by walks and rides, but for variety, and for recurrence of similar appearances. To illustrate this by one instance : — how pleasing is it to have a ready and frequent opportunity of watching, at the outlet of a lake, the stream pushing its way among



the rocks in lively contrast with the stillness from which it has escaped ; and how amusing to compare its noisy and turbulent motions with the gentle playfulness of the breezes, that may be starting up or wandering here and there over the faintly-rippled surface of the broad water ! I may add, as a general remark, that, in lakes of great width, the shores cannot be distinctly seen at the same time, and therefore contribute little to mutual illustration and ornament ; and if, like the American and Asiatic lakes, the opposite shores are out of sight of each other, then unfortunately the traveller is reminded of a nobler object ; he has the blankness of a sea-prospect without the same grandeur and accompanying sense of power.

As the comparatively small size of the lakes in the North of England is favourable to the production of variegated landscape, their *boundary-line* also is for the most part gracefully or boldly indented. That uniformity which prevails in the primitive frame of the lower grounds among all chains or clusters of mountains where large bodies of still water are bedded, is broken by the *secondary* agents of nature, ever at work.

to supply the deficiencies of the mould in which things were originally cast. It need scarcely be observed that using the word, deficiencies, I do not speak with reference to those stronger emotions which a region of mountains is peculiarly fitted to excite. The bases of those huge barriers may run for a long space in straight lines, and these parallel to each other; the opposite sides of a profound vale may ascend as exact counterparts or in mutual reflection like the billows of a troubled sea; and the impression be, from its very simplicity, more awful and sublime. Sublimity is the result of Nature's first great dealings with the superficies of the earth; but the general tendency of her subsequent operations, is towards the production of beauty, by a multiplicity of symmetrical parts uniting in a consistent whole. This is every where exemplified along the margin of these lakes. Masses of rock, that have been precipitated from the heights into the area of waters, lie frequently like stranded ships; or have acquired the compact structure of jutting piers; or project in little peninsulas crested with native wood. The smallest

rivulet — one whose silent influx is scarcely noticeable in a season of dry weather so faint is the dimple made by it on the surface of the smooth lake — will be found to have been not useless in shaping, by its deposits of gravel and soil in time of flood, a curve that would not otherwise have existed. But the more powerful brooks, encroaching upon the level of the lake, have in course of time given birth to ample promontories, whose sweeping line often contrasts boldly with the longitudinal base of the steeps on the opposite shore; while their flat or gently-sloping surface never fails to introduce, into the midst of desolation and barrenness, the elements of fertility, even where the habitations of men may not happen to have been raised. These alluvial promontories, however, threaten in some places to bisect the waters which they have long adorned; and, in course of ages, they will cause some of the lakes to dwindle into numerous and insignificant pools; which, in their turn, will finally be filled up. But the man of taste will say, it is an impertinent calculation that leads to such unwelcome conclusions; — let us rather be content with

appearances as they are, and pursue in imagination the meandering shores, whether rugged steeps, admitting of no cultivation, descend into the water; or the shore is formed by gently-sloping lawns and rich woods, or by flat and fertile meadows stretching between the margin of the lake and the mountains. Among minuter recommendations will be noted with pleasure the curved rim of fine blue gravel thrown up by the waves, especially in bays exposed to the setting-in of strong winds; here and there are found, bordering the lake, groves, if I may so call them, of reeds and bulrushes; or plots of water-lilies lifting up their large circular leaves to the breeze, while the white flower is heaving upon the wave.

The ISLANDS are neither so numerous nor so beautiful as might be expected from the account I have given of the manner in which the level areas of the vales are so frequently diversified by rocks, hills, and hillocks, scattered over them; nor are they ornamented, as are several islands of the lakes in Scotland, by the remains of old castles or other places of defence, or of monastic

edifices. There is however a beautiful cluster of islands on Winandermere; a pair pleasingly contrasted upon Rydal; nor must the solitary green island at Grasmere be forgotten. In the bosom of each of the lakes of Ennerdale and Devock-water is a single rock which, owing to its neighbourhood to the sea, is —

“ The haunt of cormorants and sea-mews’ clang,”

a music well suited to the stern and wild character of the several scenes!

This part of the subject may be concluded with observing — that, from the multitude of brooks and torrents that fall into these lakes, and of internal springs by which they are fed, and which circulate through them like veins, they are truly living lakes, “ *vivi lacus*,” and are thus discriminated from the stagnant and sullen pools frequent among mountains that have been formed by volcanoes, and from the shallow meres found in flat and fenny countries. The water is also pure and crystalline; so that, if it were not for the reflections of the incumbent mountains by which it is darkened, a delusion

might be felt, by a person resting quietly in a boat on the bosom of Winandermere or Derwent-water, similar to that which Carver so beautifully describes when he was floating alone in the middle of the lake Erie or Ontario, and could almost have imagined that his boat was suspended in an element as pure as air, or rather that the air and water were one.

Having spoken of Lakes I must not omit to mention, as a kindred feature of this country, those bodies of still water called TARNs. These are found in some of the valleys, and are very numerous upon the mountains. A Tarn, in a *Vale*, implies, for the most part, that the bed of the vale is not happily formed; that the water of the brooks can neither wholly escape, nor diffuse itself over a large area. Accordingly, in such situations, Tarns are often surrounded by a tract of boggy ground which has an unsightly appearance; but this is not always the case, and in the cultivated parts of the country, when the shores of the Tarn are determined, it differs only from the Lake in being smaller, and in belonging mostly to a smaller valley or circular recess. Of this class of

miniature lakes Loughrigg Tarn, near Grasmere, is the most beautiful example. It has a margin of green firm meadows, of rocks, and rocky woods, a few reeds here, a little company of water-lilies there, with beds of gravel or stone beyond; a tiny stream issuing neither briskly nor sluggishly out of it; but its feeding rills, from the shortness of their course, so small as to be scarcely visible. Five or six cottages are reflected in its peaceful bosom; rocky and barren steeps rise up above the hanging enclosures; and the solemn pikes of Langdale overlook, from a distance, the low cultivated ridge of land that forms the northern boundary of this small, quiet, and fertile domain. The *mountain* Tarns can only be recommended to the notice of the inquisitive traveller who has time to spare. They are difficult of access and naked; yet some of them are, in their permanent forms, very grand; and there are accidents of things which would make the meanest of them interesting. At all events, one of these pools is an acceptable sight to the mountain wanderer, not merely as an incident that diversifies the prospect, but as forming in his

mind a centre or conspicuous point to which objects, otherwise disconnected or unsubordinated, may be referred. Some few have a varied outline, with bold heath-clad promontories; and, as they mostly lie at the foot of a steep precipice, the water, where the sun is not shining upon it, appears black and sullen; and round the margin huge stones and masses of rock are scattered; some defying conjecture as to the means by which they came there, and others obviously fallen from on high — the contribution of ages! The sense, also, of some repulsive power strongly put forth — excited by the prospect of a body of pure water unattended with groves and other cheerful rural images by which fresh water is usually accompanied, and unable to give any furtherance to the meagre vegetation around it — heightens the melancholy natural to such scenes. Nor is the feeling of solitude often more forcibly or more solemnly impressed than by the side of one of these mountain pools: though desolate and forbidding, it seems a distinct place to repair to; yet where the visitants must be rare, and there can be no disturbance. Water-fowl



flock hither; and the lonely Angler may oftentimes here be seen; but the imagination, not content with this scanty allowance of society, is tempted to attribute a voluntary power to every change which takes place in such a spot, whether it be the breeze that wanders over the surface of the water, or the splendid lights of evening resting upon it in the midst of awful precipices.

“ There, sometimes does a leaping fish  
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer;  
The crags repeat the raven's croak  
In symphony austere:  
Thither the rainbow comes, the cloud,  
And mists that spread the flying shroud,  
And sunbeams, and the sounding blast, —

Though this country is, on one side, bounded by the sea, which combines beautifully, from some elevated points of view, with the inland scenery; yet the æstuaries cannot pretend to vie with those of Scotland and Wales: — the Lakes are such in the strict and usual sense of the word, being all of fresh water; nor have the Rivers,

from the shortness of their course, time to acquire that body of water necessary to confer upon them much majesty. In fact, while they continue in the mountain and lake-country, they are rather large brooks than rivers. The water is perfectly pellucid, through which in many places are seen to a great depth their beds of rock or of blue gravel which give to the water itself an exquisitely cerulean colour: this is particularly striking in the rivers, Derwent and Duddon, which may be compared, such and so various are their beauties, to any two rivers of equal length of course in any country. The number of the torrents and smaller brooks is infinite, with their water-falls and water-breaks; and they need not here be described. I will only observe that, as many, even of the smallest of these rills, have either found, or made for themselves, recesses in the sides of the mountains or in the vales, they have tempted the primitive inhabitants to settle near them for shelter; and hence the retirement and seclusion by which these cottages are endeared to the eye of the man of sensibility.

The Woods consist chiefly of oak, ash, and birch, and here and there a species of elm, with underwood of hazel, the white and black thorn, and hollies; in moist places alders and willows abound; and yews among the the rocks. Formerly the whole country must have been covered with wood to a great height up the mountains; and native Scotch Firs (as in the northern part of Scotland to this day) must have grown in great profusion. But no one of these old inhabitants of the country remains, or perhaps has done for some hundreds of years; beautiful traces however of the universal sylvan appearance the country formerly had, are yet seen, both in the native coppice-woods that remain, and have been protected by enclosures, and also in the forest-trees and hollies, which, though disappearing fast, are yet scattered both over the inclosed and uninclosed parts of the mountains. The same is expressed by the beauty and intricacy with which the fields and coppice-woods are often intermingled: the plough of the first settlers having followed naturally the veins of richer, dryer, or less stony soil; and thus it has shaped out an intermixture of wood

and lawn with a grace and wildness which it would have been impossible for the hand of studied art to produce. Other trees have been introduced within these last fifty years, such as beeches, larches, limes, &c. and plantations of Scotch firs, seldom with advantage, and often with great injury to the appearance of the country; but the sycamore (which I believe was brought into this island from Germany, not more than two hundred years ago) has long been the favourite of the cottagers; and, with the Scotch fir, has been chosen to screen their dwellings; and is sometimes found in the fields whither the winds or waters may have carried its seeds.

The want most felt, however, is that of timber trees. There are few magnificent ones to be found near any of the lakes; and, unless greater care be taken, there will in a short time scarcely be left an ancient oak that would repay the cost of felling. The neighbourhood of Rydal, notwithstanding the havoc which has been made, is yet nobly distinguished. In the woods of Lowther, also, is found an almost matchless store of the grandest

trees, and all the majesty and wildness of the native forest.

Among the smaller vegetable ornaments provided here by nature, must be reckoned the juniper, bilberry, and the broom-plant, with which the hills and woods abound; the Dutch myrtle in moist places; and the endless variety of brilliant flowers in the fields and meadows; which, if the agriculture of the country were more carefully attended to, would disappear. Nor can I omit again to notice the lichens and mosses, — their profusion, beauty, and variety exceed those of any other country I have seen.

Thus far I have chiefly spoken of the features by which Nature has discriminated this country from others. I will now describe, in general terms, in what manner it is indebted to the hand of man. What I have to notice on this subject will emanate most easily and perspicuously from a description of the ancient and present inhabitants, their occupations, their condition of life, the distribution of landed property among them, and the tenure by which it is holden.

The reader will suffer me here to recall to his mind the shapes of the valleys and their position with respect to each other, and the forms and substance of the intervening mountains. He will people the valleys with lakes and rivers; the coves and sides of the mountains with pools and torrents; and will bound half of the circle which we have contemplated by the sands of the sea, or by the sea itself. He will conceive that, from the point upon which he before stood, he looks down upon this scene before the country had been penetrated by any inhabitants: — to vary his sensations and to break in upon their stillness, he will form to himself an image of the tides visiting and re-visiting the Friths, the main sea dashing against the bolder shore, the rivers pursuing their course to be lost in the mighty mass of waters. He may see or hear in fancy the winds sweeping over the lakes, or piping with a loud voice among the mountain peaks; and, lastly, may think of the primeval woods shedding and renewing their leaves with no human eye to notice, or human heart to regret or welcome the change. “When the first settlers entered this

region (says an animated writer) they found it over-spread with wood; forest trees, the fir, the oak, the ash, and the birch, had skirted the fells, tufted the hills, and shaded the valleys through centuries of silent solitude; the birds and beasts of prey reigned over the meeker species; and the *bellum inter omnia* maintained the balance of nature in the empire of beasts."

Such was the state and appearance of this region when the aboriginal colonists of the Celtic tribes were first driven or drawn towards it, and became joint tenants with the wolf, the boar, the wild bull, the red deer, and the leigh, a gigantic species of deer which has been long extinct; while the inaccessible crags were occupied by the falcon, the raven, and the eagle. The inner parts were too secluded and of too little value to participate much of the benefit of Roman manners; and though these conquerors encouraged the Britons to the improvement of their lands in the plain country of Furness and Cumberland, they seem to have had little connection with the mountains, except for military purposes, or in subservience to the profit they drew from the mines.

When the Romans retired from Great Britain, it is well known that these mountain fastnesses furnished a protection to some unsubdued Britons, long after the more accessible and more fertile districts had been seized by the Saxon or Danish invader. A few though distinct traces of Roman forts or camps, as at Ambleside, and upon Dunmallet, and two or three circles of rude stones attributed to the Druids, are the only vestiges that remain upon the surface of the country, of these ancient occupants ; and, as the Saxons and Danes, who succeeded to the possession of the villages and hamlets which had been established by the Britons, seem at first to have confined themselves to the open country, — we may descend at once to times long posterior to the conquest by the Normans when their feudal polity was regularly established. We may easily conceive that these narrow dales and mountain sides, choaked up as they must have been with wood, lying out of the way of communication with other parts of the Island, and upon the edge of a hostile kingdom, could have little attraction for the high-born and powerful ; especially as the more open parts of the



country furnished positions for castles and houses of defence sufficient to repel any of those sudden attacks, which, in the then rude state of military knowledge, could be made upon them. Accordingly, the more retired regions (and, observe, it is to these I am now confining myself) must have been neglected or shunned even by the persons whose baronial or signioral rights extended over them, and left, doubtless, partly as a place of refuge for outlaws and robbers, and partly granted out for the more settled habitation of a few vassals following the employment of shepherds or woodlanders. Hence these lakes and inner valleys are unadorned by any of the remains of ancient grandeur, castles, or monastic edifices, which are only found upon the skirts of this country, as Furness Abbey, Calder Abbey, the Priory of Lannercost, Gleaston Castle, — long ago a residence of the Flemings, — and the numerous ancient castles of the Cliffords and the Dacres. On the southern side of these mountains, (especially in that part known by the name of Furness Fells, which is more remote from the borders,) the state of society would ne-

cessarily be more settled ; though it was fashioned not a little, with the rest of the country, by its neighbourhood to a hostile kingdom. We will therefore give a sketch of the œconomy of the Abbots in the distribution of lands among their tenants, as similar plans were doubtless adopted by other Lords, and as the consequences have affected the face of the country materially to the present day, being in fact one of the principal causes which give it such a striking superiority, in beauty and interest, over all other parts of the island.

“ When the Abbots of Furness,” says an author before cited, “ enfranchised their villains, and raised them to the dignity of customary tenants, the lands, which they had cultivated for their lord, were divided into whole tenements ; each of which, besides the customary annual rent, was charged with the obligation of having in readiness a man completely armed for the king’s service on the borders, or elsewhere : each of these whole tenements was again subdivided into four equal parts ; each villain had one ; and the party tenant contributed his share to the support of the man at arms,

and of other burdens. These divisions were not properly distinguished; the land remained mixed; each tenant had a share through all the arable and meadow-land, and common of pasture over all the wastes. These sub-tenements were judged sufficient for the support of so many families; and no further division was permitted. These divisions and sub-divisions were convenient at the time for which they were calculated; the land, so parcelled out, was, of necessity, more attended to; and the industry greater, when more persons were to be supported by the produce of it. The frontier of the kingdom, within which Furness was considered, was in a constant state of attack and defence; more hands, therefore, were necessary to guard the coast, to repel an invasion from Scotland, or make reprisals on the hostile neighbour. The dividing the lands in such manner as has been shown, increased the number of inhabitants, and kept them at home till called for; and, the land being mixed, and the several tenants united in equipping the plough, the absence of the fourth man was no prejudice to the cultivation of his land, which was committed to the care of three.

While the villains of Low Furness were thus distributed over the land, and employed in agriculture; those of High Furness were charged with the care of flocks and herds, to protect them from the wolves which lurked in the thickets, and in winter to browse them with the tender sprouts of hollies and ash. This custom was not till lately discontinued in High Furness; and holly-trees were carefully preserved for that purpose when all other wood was cleared off; large tracts of common being so covered with these trees, as to have the appearance of a forest of hollies. At the Shepherd's call, the flocks surrounded the holly-bush, and received the croppings at his hand, which they greedily nibbled up, bleating for more. The Abbots of Furness enfranchised these pastoral vassals, and permitted them to enclose *quillets* to their houses, for which they paid encroachment rent." — West's *Antiquities of Furness*.

However desirable, for the purposes of defence, a numerous population might be, it was not possible to make at once the same numerous allotments among the untilled valleys, and upon the sides of the mountains, as

had been made in the cultivated plains. The enfranchised shepherd, or woodlander, having chosen there his place of residence, builds it of sods, or of the mountain-stone, and, with the permission of his lord, encloses, like Robinson Crusoe, a small croft or two immediately at his door for such animals chiefly as he wishes to protect. Others are happy to imitate his example, and avail themselves of the same privileges; and thus a population, mainly of Danish or Norse origin, as the dialect indicates, crept on towards the more secluded parts of the valleys. Chapels, daughters of some distant mother church, are first erected in the more open and fertile vales, as those of Bowness and Grasmere, offsets of Kendal; which again, after a period, as the settled population increases, become mother-churches to smaller edifices, scattered, at length, in almost every dale throughout the country. The enclosures, formed by the tenantry, are for a long time confined to the home-steads; and the arable and meadow land of the vales is possessed in common field; the several portions being marked out by stones, bushes, or

trees; which portions, where the custom has survived, to this day are called *dales*, from the word *deylen*, to distribute; but while the valley was thus lying open, enclosures seem to have taken place upon the sides of the mountains; because the land there was not intermixed, and was of little comparative value; and, therefore, small opposition would be made to its being appropriated by those to whose habitations it was contiguous. Hence the singular appearance which the sides of many of these mountains exhibit, intersected, as they are, almost to their summit, with stone walls, of which the fences are always formed. When first erected, they must have little disfigured the face of the country; as part of the lines would every where be hidden by the quantity of native wood then remaining; and the lines would also be broken (as they still are) by the rocks which interrupt and vary their course. In the meadows, and in those parts of the lower grounds where the soil has not been sufficiently drained, and could not afford a stable foundation, there, when the increasing value of land, and the inconvenience suffered from

intermixed plots of ground in common field, had induced each inhabitant to inclose his own, they were compelled to make the fences of alders, willows, and other trees. These, where the native wood had disappeared, have frequently enriched the valleys with a sylvan appearance ; while the intricate intermixture of property has given to the fences a graceful irregularity, which, where large properties are prevalent, and larger capitals employed in agriculture, is unknown. This sylvan appearance is still further heightened by the number of ash-trees which have been planted in rows along the quick fences, and along the walls, for the purpose of browsing cattle at the approach of winter. The branches are lopped off and strewed upon the pastures ; and, when the cattle have stripped them of the leaves, they are used for repairing hedges, or for fuel.

We have thus seen a numerous body of Dalesmen creeping into possession of their home-steads, their little crofts, their mountain-enclosures ; and, finally, the whole vale is visibly divided ; except, perhaps, here and there

some marshy ground, which, till fully drained, would not repay the trouble of enclosing. But these last partitions do not seem to have been general, till long after the pacification of the Borders, by the union of the two crowns ; when the cause, which had first determined the distribution of land into such small parcels, had not only ceased, — but likewise a general improvement had taken place in the country, with a correspondent rise in the value of its produce. From the time of the union, it is certain that this species of feudal population would rapidly diminish. That it was formerly much more numerous than it is at present, is evident from the multitude of tenements (I do not mean houses, but small divisions of land,) which belonged formerly each to its several proprietor, and for which separate fines are paid to the manorial lord at this day. These are often in the proportion of four to one, of the present occupants. “ Sir Launcelot Threlkeld, who lived in the reign of Henry VII. was wont to say, he had three noble houses, one for pleasure, Crosby, in Westmoreland, where he had a park full of deer ; one



for profit and warmth, wherein to reside in winter, namely, Yanwith; nigh Penrith; and the third, Threlkeld (on the edge of the vale of Keswick) well stocked with tenants to go with him to the wars." But, as I have said, from the union of the two crowns, this numerous vassalage (their services not being wanted) would rapidly diminish; various tenements would be united in one possessor; and the aboriginal houses, probably little better than hovels, like the kraels of savages, or the huts of the Highlanders of Scotland, would many of them fall into decay, and wholly disappear, while the place of others was supplied by substantial and comfortable buildings, a majority of which remain to this day scattered over the valleys, and are in many the only dwellings found in them.

From the time of the erection of these houses, till within the last fifty years, the state of society, though no doubt slowly and gradually improving, underwent no material change. Corn was grown in these vales (through which no carriage-road had been made) sufficient upon each estate to furnish bread for each family, and no

more: notwithstanding the union of several tenements, the possessions of each inhabitant still being small, in the same field was seen an intermixture of different crops; and the plough was interrupted by little rocks, mostly overgrown with wood, or by spongy places, which the tillers of the soil had neither leisure nor capital to convert into firm land. The storms and moisture of the climate induced them to sprinkle their upland property with outhouses of native stone, as places of shelter for their sheep, where, in tempestuous weather, food was distributed to them. Every family spun from its own flock the wool with which it was clothed; a weaver was here and there found among them; and the rest of their wants were supplied by the produce of the yarn, which they carded and spun in their own houses, and carried to market, either under their arms, or more frequently on pack-horses, a small train taking their way weekly down the valley or over the mountains to the most commodious town. They had, as I have said, their rural chapel, and of course their minister, in clothing or in manner of life, in no respect differing from themselves,

except on the Sabbath-day; this was the sole distinguished individual among them; every thing else, person and possession, exhibited a perfect equality, a community of shepherds and agriculturists, proprietors, for the most part, of the lands which they occupied and cultivated.

While the process above detailed was going on, the native forest must have been every where receding; but trees were planted for the sustenance of the flocks in winter, — such was then the rude state of agriculture; and, for the same cause, it was necessary that care should be taken of some part of the growth of the native forest. Accordingly, in Queen Elizabeth's time, this was so strongly felt, that a petition was made to the Crown, praying, "that the Blomaries in high Furness might be abolished, on account of the quantity of wood which was consumed in them for the use of the mines, to the great detriment of the cattle." But this same cause, about a hundred years after, produced effects directly contrary to those which had been deprecated. The re-establish-

ment, at that period, of furnaces upon a large scale, made it the interest of the people to convert the steeper and more stony of the enclosures, sprinkled over with remains of the native forest, into close woods, which, when cattle and sheep were excluded, rapidly sowed and thickened themselves. I have already directed the reader's attention to the cause by which tufts of wood, pasturage, meadow, and arable land, with its various produce, are intricately intermingled in the same field, and he will now see, in like manner, how enclosures entirely of wood, and those of cultivated ground, are blended all over the country under a law of similar wildness.

An historic detail has thus been given of the manner in which the hand of man has acted upon the surface of the inner regions of this mountainous country, as incorporated with and subservient to the powers and processes of nature. We will now take a view of the same agency acting, within narrower bounds, for the production of the few works of art and accommodations of life which, in so

simple a state of society, could be necessary. These are merely habitations of man and coverts for beasts, roads and bridges, and places of worship.

And to begin with the COTTAGES. They are scattered over the valleys, and under the hill sides, and on the rocks; and, even to this day, in the more retired dales, without any intrusion of more assuming buildings.

Clustered like stars some few, but single most,  
And lurking dimly in their shy retreats,  
Or glancing on each other cheerful looks,  
Like separated stars with clouds between.

MS.

The dwelling-houses, and contiguous outhouses, are, in many instances, of the colour of the native rock, out of which they have been built; but, frequently the dwelling-house has been distinguished from the barn and byer by roughcast and white wash, which, as the inhabitants are not hasty in renewing it, in a few years acquires, by the influence of weather, a tint at once sober and variegated. As these houses have been from father to son inhabited by persons engaged in the same occupations, yet neces-

sarily with changes in their circumstances, they have received additions and accommodations adapted to the needs of each successive occupant, who, being for the most part proprietor, was at liberty to follow his own fancy; so that these humble dwellings remind the contemplative spectator of a production of nature, and may (using a strong expression) rather be said to have grown than to have been erected; — to have risen by an instinct of their own out of the native rock! so little is there in them of formality; such is their wildness and beauty. Among the numerous recesses and projections in the walls and in the different stages of their roofs, are seen the boldest and most harmonious effects of contrasted sunshine and shadow. It is a favourable circumstance, that the strong winds, which sweep down the valleys, induced the inhabitants, at a time when the materials for building were easily procured, to furnish many of these dwellings with substantial porches; and such as have not this defence, are seldom unprovided with a projection of two large slates over their thresholds. Nor will the singular beauty of the chimneys escape the eye of the at-

tentive traveller. Sometimes a low chimney, almost upon a level with the roof, is overlaid with a slate, supported upon four slender pillars, to prevent the wind from driving the smoke down the chimney. Others are of a quadrangular shape, rising one or two feet above the roof; which low square is often surmounted by a tall cylinder, giving to the cottage chimney the most beautiful shape in which it is ever seen. Nor will it be too fanciful or refined to remark, that there is a pleasing harmony between a tall chimney of this circular form, and the living column of smoke, through the still air ascending from it. These dwellings, as has been said, are built of rough unhewn stone; and they are roofed with slates, which were rudely taken from the quarry before the present art of splitting them was understood, and are therefore rough and uneven in their surfaces, so that both the coverings and sides of the houses have furnished places of rest for the seeds of lichens, mosses, ferns, and flowers. Hence buildings, which, in their very form call to mind the processes of nature, do thus, clothed with this vegetable garb, appear to be received

into the bosom of the living principle of things, as it acts and exists among the woods and fields; and, by their colour and their shape, affectingly direct the thoughts to that tranquil course of nature and simplicity, along which the humble-minded inhabitants have through so many generations been led. Add the little garden with its shed for bee-hives, its small beds of pot-herbs, and its borders and patches of flowers for Sunday posies, with sometimes a choice few too much prized to be plucked; an orchard of proportioned size; a cheese-press, often supported by some tree near the door; a cluster of embowering sycamores for summer shade; with a tall Scotch fir, through which the winds sing when other trees are leafless; the little rill or household spout murmuring in all seasons;—combine these incidents and images together, and you have the representative idea of a mountain-cottage in this country so beautifully formed in itself, and so richly adorned by the hand of nature.

Till within the last fifty years there was no communication between any of these vales by carriage-roads; all bulky articles were transported on pack-horses.



Owing, however, to the population not being concentrated in villages but scattered, the valleys themselves were intersected as now by innumerable lanes and pathways leading from house to house and from field to field. These lanes, where they are fenced by stone walls, are mostly bordered with ashes, hazels, wild roses, and beds of tall fern, at their base; while the walls themselves if old are overspread with mosses, small ferns, wild strawberries, the geranium, and lichens; and if the wall happen to rest against a bank of earth, it is sometimes almost wholly concealed by a rich facing of stone-fern. It is a great advantage to a traveller or resident, that these numerous lanes and paths, if he be a zealous admirer of nature, will introduce him, nay, will lead him on into all the recesses of the country, so that the hidden treasures of its landscapes will by an ever-ready guide be laid open to his eyes.

Likewise to the smallness of the several properties is owing the great number of bridges over the brooks and torrents, and the daring and graceful neglect of danger or accommodation with which so many of them

are constructed, the rudeness of the forms of some, and their endless variety. But, when I speak of this rudeness, I must at the same time add that many of these structures are in themselves models of elegance, as if they had been formed upon principles of the most thoughtful architecture. It is to be regretted that these monuments of the skill of our ancestors, and of that happy instinct by which consummate beauty was produced, are disappearing fast; but sufficient specimens remain to give a high gratification to the man of genuine taste. Such travellers as may not be accustomed to pay attention to these things, will excuse me if I point out the proportion between the span and elevation of the arch, the lightness of the parapet, and the graceful manner in which its curve follows faithfully that of the arch.

Upon this subject I have nothing further to notice, except the places of worship, which have mostly a little school-house adjoining. The architecture of these churches and chapels, where they have not been recently rebuilt or modernised, is of a style not less appropriate

and admirable than that of the dwelling-houses and other structures. How sacred the spirit by which our forefathers were directed ! The *religio loci* is no where outraged by these unstinted, yet unpretending, works of human hands. They exhibit generally a well-proportioned oblong with a suitable porch, in some instances a steeple tower, and in others nothing more than a small belfry in which one or two bells hang visibly. — But these objects, though pleasing in their forms, must necessarily, more than others in rural scenery, derive their interest from the sentiments of piety and reverence for the modest virtues and simple manners of humble life with which they may be contemplated. A man must be very insensible who would not be touched with pleasure at the sight of the chapel of Buttermere, so strikingly expressing by its diminutive size how small must be the congregation there assembled, as it were, like one family ; and proclaiming at the same time to the passenger, in connection with the surrounding mountains, the depth of that seclusion in which the people live that has rendered necessary the building of a separate place of worship for

so few. A Patriot, calling to mind the images of the stately fabrics of Canterbury, York, or Westminster, will find a heart-felt satisfaction in presence of this lowly pile, as a monument of the wise institutions of our country, and as evidence of the all-pervading and paternal care of that venerable Establishment of which it is perhaps the humblest daughter.—The edifice is scarcely larger than many of the single stones or fragments of rock which are scattered near it.

We have thus far confined our observations on this division of the subject to that part of these Dales which runs up far into the mountains. In addition to such objects as have been hitherto described, it may be mentioned that, as we descend towards the open part of the Vales, we meet with the remains of ancient Parks, and with old Mansions of more stately architecture; and it may be observed that to these circumstances the country owes whatever ornament it retains of majestic and full-grown timber, as the remains of the park of the ancient family of the Ratcliffs at Derwent-water, Gowbray-park, and the venerable woods of Rydal. Through the

open parts of the vales are scattered, with more spacious domains attached to them, houses of a middle rank, between the pastoral cottage and the old hall-residence of the more wealthy *Estatesman*.

Thus has been given a faithful description, the minuteness of which the reader will pardon, of the face of this country as it was, and had been through centuries, till within the last fifty years. Towards the head of these Dales was found a perfect Republic of Shepherds and Agriculturalists, among whom the plough of each man was confined to the maintenance of his own family; or to the occasional accommodation of his neighbour. Two or three cows furnished each family with milk and cheese. The Chapel was the only edifice that presided over these dwellings, the supreme head of this pure Commonwealth; the members of which existed in the midst of a powerful empire, like an ideal society or an organised community, whose constitution had been imposed and regulated by the mountains which protected it. Neither Knight, nor Esquire, nor high-born Nobleman, was here; but many of these humble sons of the hills had a con-

sciousness that the land, which they walked over and tilled, had for more than five hundred years been possessed by men of their name and blood; — and venerable was the transition, when a curious traveller, descending from the heart of the mountains, had come to some ancient manorial residence in the more open parts of the Vales, which, through the rights attached to its proprietor, connected the almost visionary mountain Republic he had been contemplating with the substantial frame of society as existing in the laws and constitution of a mighty empire.

Such, as I have said, was the appearance of things till within these last fifty years. A practice, by a strange abuse of terms denominated Ornamental Gardening, was at that time becoming prevalent over England. In union with an admiration of this art and in some instances in opposition to it, had been generated a relish for select parts of natural scenery; and Travellers instead of confining their observations to Towns, Manufactories, or Mines, began (a thing till then unheard of) to wander over the Island in search of sequestered spots distin-

guished, as they might accidentally have learned, for the sublimity or beauty of the forms of Nature there to be seen. — Dr. Brown, the celebrated Author of the *Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times*, published a letter to a Friend in which the attractions of the Vale of Keswick were delineated with a powerful pencil, and the feeling of a genuine Enthusiast. Gray the Poet followed; he died soon after his forlorn and melancholy pilgrimage to the Vale of Keswick, and the record left behind him of what he had seen and felt in this journey excited that pensive interest with which the human mind is ever disposed to listen to the farewell words of a Man of genius. The journal of Gray feelingly showed how the gloom of ill health and low spirits had been irradiated by objects, which the Author's powers of mind enabled him to describe with distinctness and unaffected simplicity. Every reader of this journal must have been impressed with the words that conclude his notice of the Vale of Grasmere — “ Not a single red tile, no flaring gentleman's house or garden-wall, breaks in upon the repose of this little unsuspected paradise; but all is peace,

rusticity, and happy poverty in its neatest and most becoming attire."

What is here so justly said of Grasmere applied almost equally to all its sister Vales. It was well for the undisturbed pleasure of the Poet that he had no forebodings of the change which was soon to take place; and it might have been hoped that these words, indicating how much the charm of what *was*, depended upon what was *not*; would of themselves have preserved the ancient franchises of this and other kindred mountain retirements from trespass; or, (shall I dare to say?) would have secured scenes so consecrated from profanation. The lakes had now become celebrated; visitors flocked hither from all parts of England; the fancies of some were smitten so deeply, that they became settlers; and the Islands of Derwent-water and Winandermere, as they offered the strongest temptation, were the first places seized upon, and were instantly defaced by the intrusion.

The venerable wood that had grown for centuries round the small house called St. Herbert's Hermitage,



had indeed some years before been felled by its native proprietor, and the whole island had been planted anew with Scotch firs left to spindle up by each other's side — a melancholy phalanx, defying the power of the winds, and disregarding the regret of the spectator, who might otherwise have cheated himself into a belief, that some of the decayed remains of those oaks, the place of which is in this manner usurped, had been planted by the Hermit's own hand. Comparatively, however, this sainted spot suffered little injury. The Hind's Cottage upon Vicar's island, in the same lake, with its embowering sycamores and cattle-shed, disappeared, at the bidding of an alien improver, from the corner where they had stood; and right in the middle, and upon the precise point of the island's highest elevation, rose a tall square habitation, with four sides exposed, like an observatory, or a warren-house reared upon an eminence for the detection of depredators, or, like the temple of Æolus, where all the winds pay him obeisance. Round this novel structure, but at respectful distance, platoons of firs were stationed, as if to protect their commander when weather and time should somewhat have shattered his

strength. Within the narrow limits of this island were typified also the state and strength of a kingdom, and its religion as it had been and was, — for neither was the druidical circle uncreated, nor the church of the present establishment; nor the stately pier, emblem of commerce and navigation; nor the fort, to deal out thunder upon the approaching invader. The taste of a succeeding proprietor rectified the mistakes as far as was practicable, and has ridded the spot of all its puerilities. The church, after having been docked of its steeple, is applied, both ostensibly and really, to the purpose for which the body of the pile was actually erected, namely, a boat-house; the fort is demolished, and, without indignation on the part of the spirits of the ancient Druids who officiated at the circle upon the opposite hill, the mimic arrangement of stones, with its *sanctum sanctorum*, has been swept away.

The present instance has been singled out, extravagant as it is, because, unquestionably, this beautiful country has, in numerous other places, suffered from the same spirit, though not clothed exactly in the same form, nor active in an equal degree. It will be sufficient here to utter a regret

for the changes that have been made upon the principal Island at Winandermere, and in its neighbourhood. What could be more unfortunate than the taste that suggested the paring of the shores, and surrounding with an embankment this spot of ground, the natural shape of which was so beautiful ! An artificial appearance has thus been given to the whole, while infinite varieties of minute beauty have been destroyed. Could not the margin of this noble island be given back to nature ? Winds and waves work with a careless and graceful hand ; and, should they in some places carry away a portion of the soil, the trifling loss would be amply compensated by the additional spirit, dignity, and loveliness, which these agents and the other powers of nature would soon communicate to what was left behind. As to the larch-plantations upon the main shore, — they who remember the original appearance of the rocky steeps scattered over with native hollies and ash-trees, will be prepared to agree with what I shall have to say hereafter upon plantations in general.

But, in truth, no one can now travel through the more

frequented tracts, without being offended at almost every turn by an introduction of discordant objects, disturbing that peaceful harmony of form and colour which had been through a long lapse of ages most happily preserved.

All gross transgressions of this kind originate, doubtless, in a feeling natural and honourable to the human mind, viz. the pleasure which it receives from distinct ideas, and from the perception of order, regularity, and contrivance. Now, unpractised minds receive these impressions only from objects that are divided from each other by strong lines of demarcation; hence the delight with which such minds are smitten by formality and harsh contrast. But I would beg of those who are eager to create the means of such gratification, first carefully to study what already exists; and they will find, in a country so lavishly gifted by nature, an abundant variety of forms marked out with a precision that will satisfy their desires. Moreover, a new habit of pleasure will be formed opposite to this, arising out of the perception of the fine gradations by which in

nature one thing passes away into another, and the boundaries that constitute individuality, disappear in one instance, only to be revived elsewhere under a more alluring form. The hill of Dunmallet, at the foot of Ulswater, was once divided into different portions, by avenues of fir-trees, with a green and almost perpendicular lane descending down the steep hill through each avenue ;—contrast this quaint appearance with the image of the same hill overgrown with self-planted wood, — each tree springing up in the situation best suited to its kind, and with that shape which the situation constrained or suffered it to take. What endless melting and playing into each other of forms and colours does the one offer to a mind at once attentive and active ; and how insipid and lifeless, compared with it, appear those parts of the former exhibition with which a child, a peasant perhaps, or a citizen unfamiliar with natural imagery, would have been most delighted !

I cannot, however, omit observing, that the disfigurement which this country has undergone, has not proceeded wholly from those common feelings of human

nature which have been referred to as the primary sources of bad taste in rural scenery; another cause must be added, which has chiefly shown itself in its effect upon buildings. I mean a warping of the natural mind occasioned by a consciousness that, this country being an object of general admiration, every new house would be looked at and commented upon either for approbation or censure. Hence all the deformity and ungracefulness that ever pursue the steps of constraint or affectation. Men, who in Leicestershire or Northamptonshire would probably have built a modest dwelling like those of their sensible neighbours, have been turned out of their course; and, acting a part, no wonder if, having had little experience, they act it ill. The craving for prospect also, which is immoderate, particularly in new settlers, has rendered it impossible that buildings, whatever might have been their architecture, should in most instances be ornamental to the landscape; rising as they do from the summits of naked hills in staring contrast to the snugness and privacy of the ancient houses.

No man is to be condemned for a desire to decorate his residence and possessions ; feeling a disposition to applaud such an endeavour, I would show how the end may be best attained. The rule is simple ; with respect to grounds — work, where you can, in the spirit of nature with an invisible hand of art. Planting, and a removal of wood, may thus and thus only be carried on with good effect ; and the like may be said of building, if Antiquity, who may be styled the co-partner and sister of Nature, be not denied the respect to which she is entitled. I have already spoken of the beautiful forms of the ancient mansions of this country, and of the happy manner in which they harmonise with the forms of nature. Why cannot these be taken as a model, and modern internal convenience be confined within their external grace and dignity ? Expense to be avoided, or difficulties to be overcome, may prevent a close adherence to this model ; still, however, it might be followed to a certain degree in the style of architecture and in the choice of situation, if the thirst for prospect were mitigated by those considerations of comfort, shelter, and convenience, which

used to be chiefly sought after. But, should an aversion to old fashions unfortunately exist, accompanied with a desire to transplant into the cold and stormy North, the elegancies of a villa formed upon a model taken from countries with a milder climate, I will adduce a passage from an English poet, the divine Spenser, which will show in what manner such a plan may be realised without injury to the native beauty of these scenes.

“ Into that forest farre they thence him led,

Where was their dwelling in a pleasant glade

With MOUNTAINS round about environed,

And MIGHTY WOODS which did the valley shade,

And like a stately theatre it made,

Spreading itself into a spacious plaine ;

And in the midst a little river plaide

Emongst the pumy stones which seem'd to plaine

With gentle murmure that his course they did restraine,

Beside the same a dainty place there lay,

Planted with mirtle trees and laurels green,

In which the birds sang many a lovely lay

Of God's high praise, and of their sweet loves teene,



As it an earthly paradise had beene ;  
In whose *enclosed shadow* there was pight  
A fair pavilion, *scarcely to be seen*,  
The which was all within most richly dight;  
That greatest princes living it mote well delight."

Houses or mansions suited to a mountainous region, should be "not obvious, nor obtrusive, but retired;" and the reasons for this rule, though they have been little adverted to, are evident. Mountainous countries, more frequently and forcibly than others, remind us of the power of the elements, as manifested in winds, snows, and torrents; and accordingly make the notion of exposure very unpleasing; while shelter and comfort are in proportion necessary and acceptable. Far-winding valleys difficult of access, and the feelings of simplicity habitually connected with mountain retirements, prompt us to turn from ostentation as a thing there eminently unnatural and out of place. A mansion, amid such scenes, can never have sufficient dignity or interest to become principal in the landscape, and render the mountains, lakes, or torrents by which it may be surrounded,

a subordinate part of the view. It is, I grant, easy to conceive, that an ancient castellated building, hanging over a precipice or raised upon an island, or the peninsula of a lake, like that of Kilchurn Castle, upon Loch Awe, may not want, whether deserted or inhabited, sufficient majesty to preside for a moment in the spectator's thoughts over the high mountains among which it is embosomed; but its titles are from antiquity — a power readily submitted to upon occasion as the vicegerent of Nature: it is respected, as having owed its existence to the necessities of things, as a monument of security in times of disturbance and danger long passed-away, — as a record of the pomp and violence of passion, and a symbol of the wisdom of law; — it bears a countenance of authority, which is not impaired by decay.

“ Child of loud-throated war, the mountain-stream

Roars in thy hearing; but thy hour of rest

Is come, and thou art silent in thy age!” *MS.*

To such honours a modern edifice can lay no claim; and the puny efforts of elegance appear contemptible, when, in such situations, they are obtruded in rivalry with

the sublimities of Nature. But, towards the verge of a district like this of which we are treating, where the mountains subside into hills of moderate elevation, or in an undulating or flat country, a gentleman's mansion may, with propriety, become a principal feature in the landscape; and, itself being a work of art, works and traces of artificial ornament may, without censure, be extended around it, as they will be referred to the common centre, the house; the right of which to impress within certain limits a character of obvious ornament will not be denied, where no commanding forms of nature dispute it, or set it aside. Now, to a want of the perception of this difference, and to the causes before assigned, may chiefly be attributed the disfigurement which the Country of the Lakes has undergone, from persons who may have built, demolished, and planted, with full confidence, that every change and addition was or would become an improvement.

The principle that ought to determine the position, apparent size, and architecture of a house, viz. that it should be so constructed, and (if large) so much of it

hidden, as to admit of its being gently incorporated into the scenery of nature — should also determine its colour. Sir Joshua Reynolds used to say, “if you would fix upon the best colour for your house, turn up a stone, or pluck up a handful of grass by the roots; and see what is the colour of the soil where the house is to stand, and let that be your choice.” Of course, this precept, given in conversation, could not have been meant to be taken literally. For example, in Low Furness, where the soil, from its strong impregnation with iron, is universally of a deep red, if this rule were strictly followed, the house also must be of a glaring red; in other places it must be of a sullen black; which would only be adding annoyance to annoyance. The rule, however, as a general guide, is good; and, in agricultural districts, where large tracts of soil are laid bare by the plough, particularly if (the face of the country being undulating) they are held up to view, this rule, though not to be implicitly adhered to, should never be lost sight of; — the colour of the house ought, if possible, to have a cast or shade of the colour of the soil. The principle is, that

the house must harmonise with the surrounding landscape: accordingly, in mountainous countries, with still more confidence may it be said, “look at the rocks and those parts of the mountains where the soil is visible, and they will furnish a safe direction.” Nevertheless, it will often happen that the rocks may bear so large a proportion to the rest of the landscape, and may be of such a tone of colour, that the rule may not admit even here of being implicitly followed. For instance, the chief defect in the colouring of the Country of the Lakes, (which is most strongly felt in the summer season) is an over-prevalence of a bluish tint, which the green of the herbage, the fern, and the woods, does not sufficiently counteract. If a house, therefore, should stand where this defect prevails, I have no hesitation in saying, that the colour of the neighbouring rocks would not be the best that could be chosen. A tint ought to be introduced approaching nearer to those which, in the technical language of painters, are called *warm*: this, if happily selected, would not disturb but would animate the landscape. How often do we see this exemplified upon a

small scale by the native cottages, in cases where the glare of white-wash has been subdued by time and enriched by weather-stains ! No harshness is then seen ; but one of these cottages, thus coloured, will often form a central point to a landscape by which the whole shall be connected, and an influence of pleasure diffused over all the objects that compose the picture. But where the cold blue tint of the rocks is enriched by the iron tinge, the colour cannot be too closely imitated ; and it will be produced of itself by the stones hewn from the adjoining quarry, and by the mortar, which may be tempered with the most gravelly part of the soil. The pure blue gravel, from the bed of the river, is, however, more suitable to the mason's purpose, who will probably insist also that the house must be covered with rough-cast, otherwise it cannot be kept dry ; if this advice be taken, the builder of taste will set about contriving such means as may enable him to come the nearest to the effect aimed at.

The supposed necessity of rough-cast to keep out rain in houses not built of hewn stone or brick, has tended greatly to injure English landscape, and the neighbour-

hood of these Lakes especially, by furnishing such apt occasion for whitening buildings. That white should be a favourite colour for rural residences is natural for many reasons. The mere aspect of cleanliness and neatness thus given, not only to an individual house, but, where the practice is general, to the whole face of the country, produces moral associations so powerful, that, in the minds of many, they take place of every other relating to such objects. But what has already been said upon the subject of cottages, must have convinced men of feeling and imagination, that a human habitation of the humblest class may be rendered more deeply interesting to the affections, and far more pleasing to the eye, by other influences than a sprightly tone of colour spread over its outside. I do not, however, mean to deny, that a small white building, embowered in trees, may, in some situations, be a delightful and animating object — in no way injurious to the landscape; but this only, where it sparkles from the midst of a thick shade, and in rare and solitary instances; especially if the country be itself rich, and pleasing, and full of grand forms. On

the sides of bleak and desolate moors, we are indeed thankful for the sight of white cottages and white houses plentifully scattered, where, without these, perhaps every thing would be cheerless: this is said, however, with hesitation, and with a wilful sacrifice of some higher enjoyments. But I have certainly seen such buildings glittering at sunrise, and in wandering lights, with no common pleasure. The continental traveller also will remember, that the convents hanging from the rocks of the Rhine, the Rhone, the Danube, or among the Appenines or the mountains of Spain, are not looked at with less complacency when, as is often the case, they happen to be of a brilliant white. But this is perhaps owing, in no small degree, to the contrast of that lively colour with the gloom of monastic life, and to the general want of rural residences of smiling and attractive appearance, in those countries.

The objections to white, as a colour, in large spots or masses in landscapes, especially in a mountainous country, are insurmountable. In nature, pure white is scarcely ever found but in small objects, such as



flowers ; or in those which are transitory, as the clouds, foam of rivers, and snow. Mr. Gilpin, who notices this, has also recorded the just remark of Mr. Locke, of N——, that white destroys the *gradations* of distance ; and, therefore, an object of pure white can scarcely ever be managed with good effect in landscape-painting. Five or six white houses, scattered over a valley, by their obtrusiveness, dot the surface, and divide it into triangles, or other mathematical figures, haunting the eye, and disturbing that repose which might otherwise be perfect. I have seen a single white house materially impair the majesty of a mountain ; cutting away, by a harsh separation, the whole of its base, below the point on which the house stood. Thus was the apparent size of the mountain reduced, not by the interposition of another object in a manner to call forth the imagination, which will give more than the eye loses ; but what had been abstracted in this case was left visible ; and the mountain appeared to take its beginning, or to rise from the line of the house, instead of its own natural base. But, if I may express my own

individual feeling, it is after sunset, at the coming on of twilight, that white objects are most to be complained of. The solemnity and quietness of nature at that time are always marred, and often destroyed by them. When the ground is covered with snow, they are of course inoffensive; and in moonshine they are always pleasing — it is a tone of light with which they accord; and the dimness of the scene is enlivened by an object at once conspicuous and cheerful. I will conclude this subject with noticing, that the cold, slaty colour, which many persons, who have heard the white condemned, have adopted in its stead, must be disapproved of for the reason already given. The flaring yellow runs into the opposite extreme, and is still more censurable. Upon the whole, the safest colour, for general use, is something between a cream and a dust-colour, commonly called stone-colour; — there are, among the Lakes, examples of this that need not be pointed out.

The principle taken as our guide, viz. that the house should be so formed, and of such apparent size and colour, as to admit of its being gently incorporated with

the scenery of nature, should also be applied to the management of the grounds and plantations, and is here more urgently needed ; for it is from abuses in this department, far more even than from the introduction of exotics in architecture (if the phrase may be used) that this country has suffered. Larch and fir plantations have been spread every where, not merely with a view to profit, but in many instances for the sake of ornament. To those who plant for profit, and are thrusting every other tree out of the way to make room for their favourite, the larch, I would utter first a regret that they should have selected these lovely vales for their vegetable manufactory, when there is so much barren and irreclaimable land in the neighbouring moors, and in other parts of the Island, which might have been had for this purpose at a far cheaper rate. And I will also beg leave to represent to them, that they ought not to be carried away by flattering promises from the speedy growth of this tree ; because, in rich soils and sheltered situations, the wood, though it thrives fast, is full of sap, and of little value ; and is, likewise, very

subject to ravage from the attacks of insects, and from blight. Accordingly, in Scotland, where planting is much better understood, and carried on upon an incomparably larger scale than among us, good soil and sheltered situations are appropriated to the oak, the ash, and other deciduous trees; and the larch is now generally confined to barren and exposed ground. There the plant, which is a hardy one, is of slower growth; much less liable to injury; and the timber is of better quality. But there are many, whose circumstances permit them, and whose taste leads them, to plant with little regard to profit; and others, less wealthy, who have such a lively feeling of the native beauty of these scenes, that they are laudably not unwilling to make some sacrifices to heighten it. Both these classes of persons, I would entreat to enquire of themselves wherein that beauty which they admire consists. They would then see that, after the feeling has been gratified that prompts us to gather round our dwelling a few flowers and shrubs, which, from the circumstance of their not being native, may, by their very looks,

remind us that they owe their existence to our hands, and their prosperity to our care; they will see that, after this natural desire has been provided for, the course of all beyond has been predetermined by the spirit of the place. Before I proceed with this subject, I will prepare my way with a remark of general application, by reminding those who are not satisfied with the restraint thus laid upon them, that they are liable to a charge of inconsistency, when they are so eager to change the face of that country, whose native attractions, by the act of erecting their habitations in it, they have so emphatically acknowledged. And surely there is not in this country a single spot that would not have, if well managed, sufficient dignity to support itself, unaided by the productions of other climates, or by elaborate decorations which might be becoming elsewhere.

But to return;— having adverted to the considerations that justify the introduction of a few exotic plants, provided they be confined almost to the doors of the house, we may add, that a transition should be contrived without abruptness, from these foreigners to the rest of the

shrubs, which ought to be of the kinds scattered by Nature through the woods — holly, broom, wild-rose, elder, dogberry, white and black thorn, &c. either these only, or such as are carefully selected in consequence of their uniting in form, and harmonising in colour with them, especially with respect to colour, when the tints are most diversified, as in autumn and spring. The various sorts of fruit-and-blossom-bearing trees usually found in orchards, to which may be added those of the woods, — namely, the wilding, black cherry tree, and wild cluster-cherry (here called heck-berry), may be happily admitted as an intermediate link between the shrubs and the forest trees; which last ought almost entirely to be such as are natives of the country. Of the birch, one of the most beautiful of the native trees, it may be noticed, that, in dry and rocky situations, it outstrips even the larch, which many persons are tempted to plant merely on account of the speed of its growth. Sycamore, and the Scotch fir (which, when it has room to spread out its arms, is a noble tree) may be placed with advantage near the house; for, from their massive-

ness, they unite well with buildings, and in some situations with rocks also; having, in their forms and apparent substances, the effect of something intermediate betwixt the immoveableness and solidity of stone, and the sprays and foliage of the lighter trees. If these general rules be just, what shall we say to whole acres of artificial shrubbery and exotic trees among rocks and dashing torrents, with their own wild wood in sight — where we have the whole contents of the nurseryman's catalogue jumbled together — colour at war with colour, and form with form — among the most peaceful subjects of Nature's kingdom every where discord, distraction, and bewilderment! But this deformity, bad as it is, is not so obtrusive as the small patches and large tracts of larch plantations that are over-running the hill-sides. To justify our condemnation of these, let us again recur to Nature. The process, by which she forms woods and forests, is as follows. Seeds are scattered indiscriminately by winds, brought by waters, and dropped by birds. They perish, or produce, according as the soil upon which they fall is suited to them; and under the

same dependence, the seedling or sucker, if not cropped by animals, thrives, and the tree grows, sometimes single, taking its own shape without constraint, but for the most part being compelled to conform itself to some law imposed upon it by its neighbours. From low and sheltered places, vegetation travels upwards to the more exposed ; and the young plants are protected, and to a certain degree fashioned, by those that have preceded them. The continuous mass of foliage which would be thus produced, is broken by rocks, or by glades or open places, where the browsing of animals has prevented the growth of wood. As vegetation ascends, the winds begin also to bear their part in moulding the forms of the trees ; but, thus mutually protected, trees, though not of the hardiest kind, are enabled to climb high up the mountains. Gradually, however, by the quality of the ground, and by increasing exposure, a stop is put to their ascent ; the hardy trees only are left ; these also, by little and little, give way, — and a wild and irregular boundary is established, graceful in its outline, and never contemplated without some feeling more or



less distinct of the powers of nature by which it is imposed.

Contrast the liberty that encourages, and the law that limits, this joint work of nature and time, with the disheartening necessities, restrictions, and disadvantages, under which the artificial planter must proceed, even he whom long observation and fine feeling have best qualified for his task. In the first place his trees, however well chosen and adapted to their several situations, must generally all start at the same time; and this circumstance would of itself prevent that fine connection of parts, that sympathy and organization, if I may so express myself, which pervades the whole of a natural wood, and appears to the eye in its single trees, its masses of foliage, and their various colours when they are held up to view on the side of a mountain; or, when spread over a valley, they are looked down upon from an eminence. It is then impossible, under any circumstances, for the artificial planter to rival the beauty of nature. But a moment's thought will show that, if ten thousand of this spiky tree, the larch, are stuck in at

once upon the side of a hill, they can grow up into nothing but deformity; that, while they are suffered to stand, we shall look in vain for any of those appearances which are the chief sources of beauty in a natural wood.

It must be acknowledged that the larch, till it has outgrown the size of a shrub, shows, when looked at singly, some elegance in its form and appearance, especially in spring, decorated, as it then is, by the pink tassels of its blossoms; but, as a tree, it is less than any other pleasing; its branches (for *boughs* it has none) have no variety in the youth of the tree, and little dignity even when it attains its full growth; *leaves* it cannot be said to have, consequently neither affords shade nor shelter. In spring it becomes green long before the native trees; and its green is so peculiar and vivid that, finding nothing to harmonise with it, wherever it comes forth, a disagreeable speck is produced. In summer, when all other trees are in their pride, it is of a dingy lifeless hue; in autumn of a spiritless unvaried yellow, and in winter it is still more lamentably distin-

guished from every other deciduous tree of the forest, for they seem only to sleep, but the larch appears absolutely dead. If an attempt be made to mingle thickets, or a certain proportion of other forest-trees, with the larch, its horizontal branches intolerantly cut them down as with a scythe, or force them to spindle up to keep pace with it. The spike, in which it terminates, renders it impossible, when it is planted in numbers, that the several trees should ever blend together so as to form a mass or masses of wood. Add thousands to tens of thousands, and the appearance is still the same — a collection of separate individual trees, obstinately presenting themselves as such; and which, from whatever point they are looked at, if but seen, may be counted upon the fingers. Sunshine, or shadow, has little power to adorn the surface of such a wood; and the trees not carrying up their heads, the wind raises among them no majestic undulations. It is indeed true, that, in countries where the larch is a native, and where without interruption it may sweep from valley to valley and from hill to hill, a sublime image may be

produced by such a forest, in the same manner as by one composed of any other single tree, to the spreading of which no limits can be assigned. For sublimity will never be wanting, where the sense of innumerable multitude is lost in, and alternates with, that of intense unity; and to the ready perception of this effect, similarity and almost identity of individual form and monotony of colour contribute. But this feeling is confined to the native immeasurable forest; no artificial plantation can give it.

The foregoing observations will, I hope, (as nothing has been condemned or recommended without a substantial reason) have some influence upon those who plant for ornament merely. To those who plant for profit, I have already spoken. Let me then entreat that the native deciduous trees may be left in complete possession of the lower ground; and that plantations of larch, if introduced at all, may be confined to the highest and most barren tracts. Interposition of rocks would there break the dreary uniformity of which we have been complaining; and the winds would

take hold of the trees, and imprint upon their shapes a wildness congenial to their situation.

Having determined what kinds of trees must be wholly rejected, or at least very sparingly used, by those who are unwilling to disfigure the country ; and having shown what kinds ought to be chosen; I should have given, if I had not already overstepped my limits, a few practical rules for the manner in which trees ought to be disposed in planting. But to this subject I should attach little importance, if I could succeed in banishing such trees as introduce deformity, and could prevail upon the proprietor to confine himself either to those found in the native woods, or to such as accord with them. This is indeed the main point; for, much as these scenes have been injured by what has been taken from them — buildings, trees, and woods, either through negligence, necessity, avarice, or caprice — it is not these removals, but the harsh *additions* that have been made, which are the worst grievance — a standing and unavoidable annoyance. Often have I felt this distinction with mingled satisfaction and regret; for, if no po-

sitive deformity or discordance be substituted or super-induced, such is the benignity of nature that, take away from her beauty after beauty, and ornament after ornament, her appearance cannot be marred; — the scars, if any be left, will gradually disappear before a healing spirit; and what remains will still be soothing and pleasing. —

“ Many hearts deplored

The fate of those old trees; and oft with pain

The traveller at this day will stop and gaze

On wrongs which nature scarcely seems to heed:

For sheltered places, bosoms, nooks, and bays,

And the pure mountains, and the gentle Tweed,

And the green silent pastures yet remain.”

There are few ancient woods left in this part of England upon which such indiscriminate ravage as is here “deplored” could now be committed. But, out of the numerous copses, fine woods might in time be raised, probably without any sacrifice of profit, by leaving, at

the periodical fellings, a due proportion of the healthiest trees to grow up into timber. — This plan has fortunately, in many instances, been adopted; and they, who have set the example, are entitled to the thanks of all persons of taste. As to the management of planting with reasonable attention to ornament, let the images of nature be your guide, and the whole secret lurks in a few words; thickets or underwoods — single trees — trees clustered or in groups — groves — unbroken woods, but with varied masses of foliage — glades — invisible or winding boundaries — in rocky districts, a seemly proportion of rock left wholly bare, and other parts half hidden — disagreeable objects concealed, and formal lines broken — trees climbing up to the horizon, and in some places ascending from its sharp edge in which they are rooted, with the whole body of the tree appearing to stand in the clear sky — in other parts woods surmounted by rocks utterly bare and naked, which add to the sense of height as if vegetation could not thither be carried, and impress a feeling of duration, power of resistance, and security from change !

I have been induced to speak thus at length with a wish to preserve the native beauty of this delightful district, because still farther changes in its appearance must inevitably follow, from the change of inhabitants and owners which is rapidly taking place. — About the same time that strangers began to be attracted to the country, and to feel a wish to settle in it, the difficulty, that would have stood in the way of their procuring situations, was lessened by an unfortunate alteration in the circumstances of the native peasantry, proceeding from a cause which then began to operate, and is now felt in every house. The family of each man, whether *estatesman* or farmer, formerly had a twofold support; first the produce of his lands and flocks; and secondly, the profit drawn from the employment of the women and children, as manufacturers; spinning their own wool in their own houses, (work chiefly done in the winter season,) and carrying it to market for sale. Hence, however numerous the children, the income of the family kept pace with its increase. But, by the invention and universal application of machinery, this second re-



source has been wholly cut off; the gains being so far reduced, as not to be sought after but by a few aged persons disabled from other employment. Doubtless, the invention of machinery has not been to these people a pure loss; for the profits arising from home-manufactures operated as a strong temptation to choose that mode of labour in neglect of husbandry. They also participate in the general benefit which the island has derived from the increased value of the produce of land, brought about by the establishment of manufactories, and in the consequent quickening of agricultural industry. But this is far from making them amends; and now that home-manufactures are nearly done away, though the women and children might at many seasons of the year employ themselves with advantage in the fields beyond what they are accustomed to do, yet still all possible exertion in this way cannot be rationally expected from persons whose agricultural knowledge is so confined, and above all where there must necessarily be so small a capital. The consequence, then, is — that, farmers being no longer able to maintain themselves

upon small farms, several are united in one, and the buildings go to decay, or are destroyed ; and that the lands of the *estatesmen* being mortgaged and the owners constrained to part with them, they fall into the hands of wealthy purchasers, who in like manner unite and consolidate ; and, if they wish to become residents, erect new mansions out of the ruins of the ancient cottages, whose little enclosures, with all the wild graces that grew out of them, disappear. The feudal tenure under which the estates are held has indeed done something towards checking this influx of new settlers ; but so strong is the inclination that these galling restraints are endured ; and it is probable that in a few years the country on the margin of the Lakes will fall almost entirely into the possession of Gentry, either strangers or natives. It is then much to be wished, that a better taste should prevail among these new proprietors ; and, as they cannot be expected to leave things to themselves, that skill and knowledge should prevent unnecessary deviations from that path of simplicity and beauty along which, without design and unconsciously, their humble

predecessors have moved. In this wish the author will be joined by persons of pure taste throughout the whole Island, who, by their visits (often repeated) to the Lakes in the North of England, testify that they deem the district a sort of national property, in which every man has a right and interest who has an eye to perceive and a heart to enjoy.

A FEW words may not improperly be annexed, with an especial view to promote the enjoyment of the Tourist. And first, in respect to the Time when this Country can be seen to most advantage. Mr. West, in his well-known Guide to the Lakes, recommends the interval from the beginning of June to the end of August; and, the two latter months being a season of vacation and leisure, it is almost exclusively in these that strangers visit the Country. But that season is by no means the best; there is a want of variety in the colouring of the mountains and woods; which, unless where they are diversified by rocks, are of a monotonous green; and, as a large portion of the Valleys is allotted to hay-grass, a want of variety is found there also. The meadows, however, are sufficiently enlivened after hay-making begins, which is much later than in the southern part

of the Island. A stronger objection is rainy weather, setting in often at this period with a vigour, and continuing with a perseverance, that may remind the disappointed and dejected traveller of those deluges of rain, which fall among the Abyssinian Mountains for the annual supply of the Nile. The months of September and October (particularly October) are generally attended with much finer weather; and the scenery is then, beyond comparison, more diversified, more splendid, and beautiful; but, on the other hand, short days prevent long excursions, and sharp and chill gales are unfavourable to parties of pleasure out of doors. Nevertheless, to the sincere admirer of Nature, who is in good health and spirits, and at liberty to make a choice, the six weeks following the 1st of September may be recommended in preference to July and August. For there is no inconvenience arising from the season which, to such a person, would not be amply recompensed by the *Autumnal* appearance of any of the more retired Valleys, into which discordant plantation, and unsuitable buildings have not yet found entrance. — In such spots,

at this season, there is an admirable compass and proportion of natural harmony in form and colour, through the whole scale of objects; — in the tender green of the after-grass upon the meadows interspersed with islands of grey or mossy rock crowned by shrubs and trees; in the irregular inclosures of standing corn or stubble-fields in like manner broken; in the mountain sides glowing with fern of divers colours; in the calm blue Lakes and River-pools; and in the foliage of the trees, through all the tints of Autumn, from the pale and brilliant yellow of the birch and ash, to the deep greens of the unfaded oak and alder, and of the ivy upon the rocks, upon the trees, and the cottages. Yet, as most travellers are either stinted or stint themselves for time, I would recommend the space between the middle or last week in May and the middle or last week of June, as affording the best combination of long days, fine weather, and variety of impressions. Few of the native trees are then in full leaf; but, for whatever may be wanting in depth of shade, far more than an equivalent will be found in the diversity of foliage, in the blossoms of the fruit-

and-berry-bearing trees which abound in the woods, and in the golden flowers of the broom and other shrubs, with which many of the copses are interveined. In those woods, also, and on those mountain-sides which have a northern aspect, and in the deep dells, many of the spring-flowers still linger; while the open and sunny places are stocked with the flowers of approaching summer. And, besides, is not an exquisite pleasure still untasted by him who has not heard the choir of Linnets and Thrushes chaunting their love-songs in the copses, woods, and hedge-rows, of a mountainous country; safe from the birds of prey, which build in the inaccessible crags, and are at all hours seen or heard wheeling about in the air? The number of those formidable creatures is probably the cause why, in the *narrow* valleys, there are no Sky-larks; as the Destroyer would be enabled to dart upon them from the near and surrounding crags, before they could descend to their ground-nests for protection. It is not often that Nightingales resort to these Vales; but almost all the other tribes of our English warblers are numerous;

and their notes, when listened to by the side of broad still waters, or when heard in unison with the murmuring of mountain-brooks, have the compass of their power enlarged accordingly. There is also an imaginative influence in the voice of the Cuckoo, when that voice has taken possession of a deep mountain valley, very different from any thing which can be excited by the same sound in a flat country. Nor must a circumstance be omitted which here renders the close of Spring especially interesting; I mean the practice of bringing down the ewes from the mountains to yearn in the valleys and enclosed grounds. The herbage being thus cropped as it springs, that first tender emerald green of the season, which would otherwise have lasted little more than a fortnight, is prolonged in the pastures and meadows for many weeks; while they are farther enlivened by the multitude of lambs bleating and skipping about. These sportive creatures, as they gather strength, are turned out upon the open mountains, and with their slender limbs, their snow-white colour, and their wild and light motions, beautifully accord or contrast with the rocks



and lawns, upon which they must now begin to seek their food. And last, but not least, at this time the traveller will be sure of room and comfortable accommodation, even in the smaller inns. I am aware that few of those, who may be inclined to profit by this recommendation will be able to do so, as the time and manner of an excursion of this kind is mostly regulated by circumstances which prevent an entire freedom of choice. It will therefore be more pleasant to me to observe, that, though the months of July and August are liable to many objections, yet it not unfrequently happens that the weather, at this time, is not more wet and stormy than they, who are really capable of enjoying the sublime forms of Nature in their utmost sublimity, would desire. For no Traveller, provided he be in good health and with any command of time, would have a just privilege to visit such scenes, if he could grudge the price of a little confinement among them or interruption in his journey for the sight or sound of a storm coming-on or clearing-away. Insensible must he be who would not congratulate himself upon the bold bursts of sunshine,

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the descending vapours, wandering lights and shadows, and the invigorated torrents and water-falls, with which broken weather, in a mountainous region, is accompanied. At such a time there is no cause to complain, either of the monotony of midsummer colouring or the glaring atmosphere of long, cloudless, and hot days.

Thus far respecting the most eligible season for visiting this country. As to the order in which objects are best seen — a Lake being composed of water flowing from higher grounds, and expanding itself till its receptacle is filled to the brim, — it follows from the nature of things, that it will appear to most advantage when approached from its outlet, especially if the Lake be in a mountainous country; for, by this way of approach, the traveller faces the grander features of the scene, and is gradually conducted into its most sublime recesses. Now, every one knows, that from amenity and beauty the transition to sublimity is easy and favourable; but the reverse is not so; for, after the faculties have been raised by communion with the sublime, they are indisposed to humbler excitement.

It is not likely that a mountain will be ascended without disappointment if a wide range of prospect be the object, unless either the summit be reached before sun-rise, or the visitant remains there until the time of sun-set, and afterwards. The precipitous sides of the mountain, and the neighbouring summits, may be seen with effect under any atmosphere which allows them to be seen at all; but *he* is the most fortunate adventurer who chances to be involved in vapours which open and let in an extent of country partially, or, dispersing suddenly, reveal the whole region from centre to circumference.

After all, it is upon the *mind* which a Traveller brings along with him that his acquisitions, whether of pleasure or profit, must principally depend. — May I be allowed a concluding word upon this subject?

Nothing is more injurious to genuine feeling than the practice of hastily and ungraciously depreciating the face of one country by comparing it with that of another. True it is, *Qui bene distinguit bene docet*; yet fastidiousness is a wretched travelling companion; and the best guide to which in matters of taste we can entrust

ourselves, is a disposition to be pleased. For example, if a Traveller be among the Alps, let him surrender up his mind to the fury of the gigantic torrents, and take delight in the contemplation of their almost irresistible violence, without complaining of the monotony of their foaming course, or being disgusted with the muddiness of the water — apparent wherever it is unagitated. In Cumberland and Westmorland let not the comparative weakness of the streams prevent him from sympathising with such impetuosity as they possess; and, making the most of present objects, let him, as he justly may do, observe with admiration the unrivalled brilliancy of the water, and that variety of motion, mood, and character, that arises out of the want of those resources by which the power of the streams in the Alps is supported. — Again, with respect to the mountains; though these are comparatively of diminutive size, though there is little of perpetual snow, and no voice of summer-avalanches is heard among them; and though traces left by the ravage of the elements are here comparatively rare and unimpressive, yet out of this very deficiency proceeds a

sense of stability and permanence that is, to many minds, more grateful —

“ While the coarse rushes to the sweeping breeze  
Sigh forth their ancient melodies.”

*See the Ode, Pass of Kirkstone.*

Among the Alps are few places that do not preclude this feeling of tranquil sublimity. Havoc, and ruin, and desolation, and encroachment, are every where more or less obtruded; and it is difficult, notwithstanding the naked loftiness of the *Pikes*, and the snow-capped summits of the *Mounts*, to escape from the depressing sensation that the whole are in a rapid process of dissolution, and, were it not that the destructive agency must abate as the heights diminish, would, in time to come, be levelled with the plains. Nevertheless I would relish to the utmost the demonstrations of every species of power at work to effect such changes.

From these general views let us descend a moment to detail. A stranger to mountain-scenery naturally on his first arrival looks out for sublimity in every object

that admits of it; and is almost always disappointed. For this disappointment there exists, I believe, no general preventive; nor is it desirable that there should. But, with regard to one class of objects, there is a point in which injurious expectations may be easily corrected. It is generally supposed that waterfalls are scarcely worth being looked at except after much rain, and that, the more swollen the stream, the more fortunate the spectator; but this is true only of large cataracts with sublime accompaniments; and not even of these without some drawbacks. The principal charm of the smaller waterfalls or cascades, consists in certain proportions of form and affinities of colour, among the component parts of the scene, and in the contrast maintained between the falling water and that which is apparently at rest; or rather settling gradually into quiet, in the pool below. Peculiarly, also, is the beauty of such a scene, where there is naturally so much agitation, heightened, here by the *glimmering*, and, towards the verge of the pool, by the *steady*, reflection of the surrounding images. Now, all those delicate distinctions are destroyed by

heavy floods, and the whole stream rushes along in foam and tumultuous confusion. I will conclude with observing, that a happy proportion of component parts is generally noticeable among the landscapes of the North of England; and, in this characteristic essential to a perfect picture, they surpass the scenes of Scotland, and, in a still greater degree, those of Switzerland.

THE END.

## ERRATA.

In Advertisement to the River Duddon, line 1. for *Tell* read *Fell*  
17th Sonnet, dele the title

Page 61. line 3. from bott. dele *and*

62. line 3. from bott. for *Birkett's* read *Burkitt's*

79. line 15. dele comma after *again*

111. line 3. from bott. for *regions* read *region*

127. line 1. dele comma after *gain*

158. line 5. after *crag*s, substitute a comma for the semicolon

179. end of first stanza, for *the song I learn*, read *song do I le ar*

184. second stanza, read the first two lines thus :

This Abbot, for he was a holy man,  
As all monks are, or surely ought to be,

200. line 4. after *light*, substitute a comma for the semicolon

208. line 2. for *and* read *with*



# POEMS

BY

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH:

INCLUDING

THE RIVER DUDDON;

VAUDRACOUR AND JULIA;

PETER BELL; THE WAGGONER;

A THANKSGIVING ODE;

AND

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.

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VOL. III.

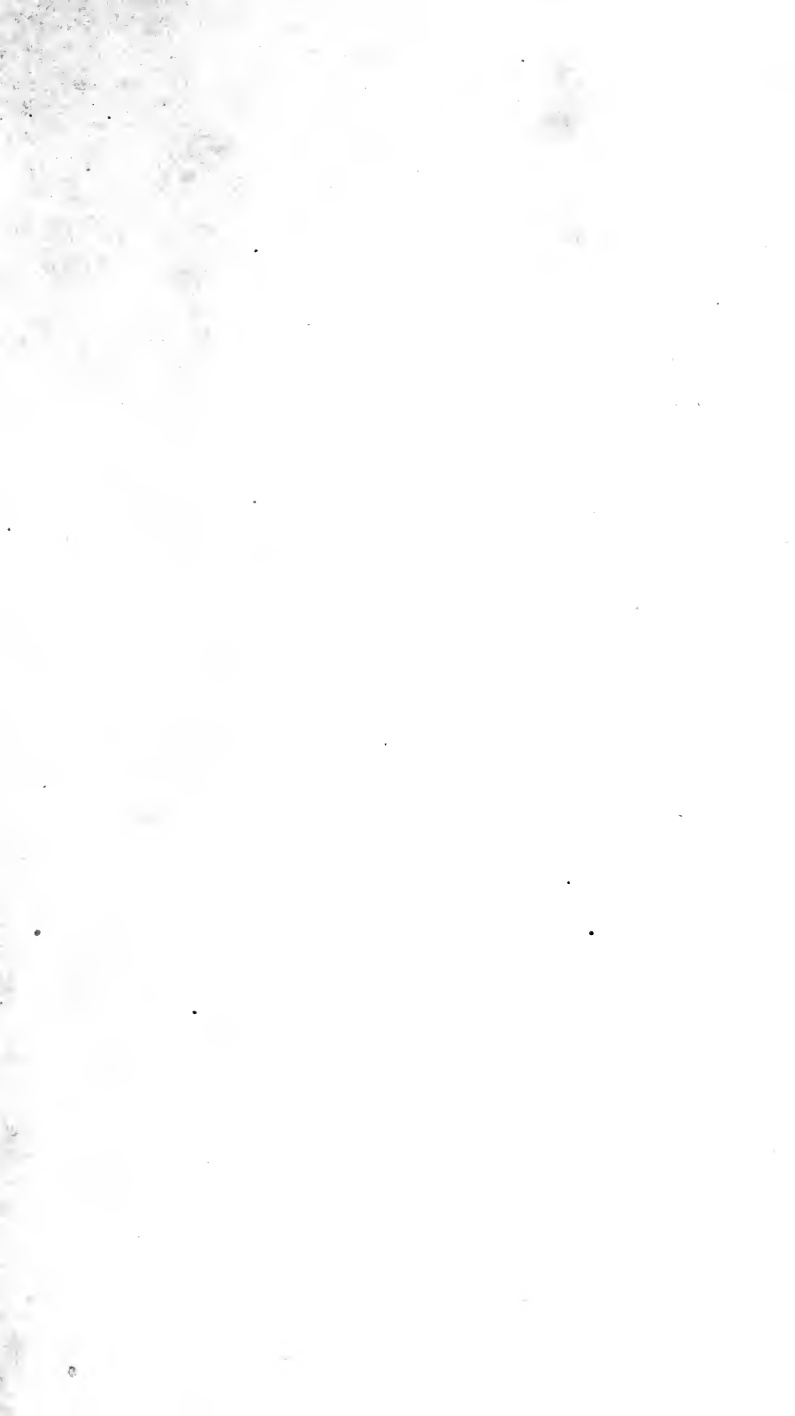
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